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BEYOND THE RIVER.

BY HAL LOWELL.

I look beyond the river, broad and free,
And, rising in unbroken lines,
Like mighty hosts of armed men, I see
The solemn, spectral pines.

Year after year the roses had and blow,
And still upon the river's banks
Loyal they stand in spite of frost and snow,
And all unthinned their ranks.

I see their neighbors leafless stand, a-cold,
A-cold and shivering—the rain
Drives fiercely through their branches gray and old—
And smites their heads amain.

They had their little day of triumph sweet,
And in the fullness of their pride,
Scorned these old sentinels in mail complete,
Guarding the river's side.

I watched the golden summer come and go,
And still in grand, unbroken lines,
Loyal they stand, in spite of frost and snow,
The army of the pines.

The White Witch: OR, THE LEAGUE OF THREE. A STRANGE STORY OF AMERICAN LIFE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "HEART OF FIRE," "WOLF DEMON,"
"SCARLET HAND," "ACE OF SPADES," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

WEAVING THE WEB.

TULIP and Stoll looked at O'Connell in astonishment, but replied not to his plainly put question.

"Come, gentlemen, your answer?" said O'Connell, impatiently, finding that they did not speak. "Do you know I fancy that if Montgomery had the same cause for revenge against you that you have against him, and his hands the weapons of vengeance that I offer you, he would not hesitate long about accepting, cold, 'canny' Scotchman as he is, though he was born in America and the blood of two nations runs in his veins."

"I, for my part, can not answer at present," said Tulip, with considerable hesitation.

"Nor I," muttered Stoll.
"You require time?"
"Yes," both answered, in a breath.
"To think it over, eh?"
"Yes," again replied Tulip, and Stoll nodded assent.

"No, gentlemen, do not try to deceive me. I am not worthy to be your chief, if I could be deceived so easily."

Tulip and Stoll looked at each other. The masks upon their faces hid a strange expression.

O'Connell noticed the look.

"I say chief, because in this League of Three I am to be the chief. It was my brain that conceived the idea of the league. Alone—each acting for himself—we are powerless against our common enemy. Like Napoleon, he would beat us in 'detail.' But leagued together—a brotherhood of three, each for all, and all for one, like the Three Musketeers of Dumas—we can pull him down from his proud position in the world and trample him beneath our feet," said the Irishman, calmly and smoothly.

Tulip and Stoll listened in amazement.

They felt the force of O'Connell's words.

"And now, gentlemen, I'll tell you why you require time and can not answer my question at once," continued the Irishman. "In the first place, you, Stoll, have made up your mind to see Montgomery and try—if possible—to crawl out of the extremely awkward position in which your own acts have placed you."

Stoll started with astonishment. O'Connell had guessed his very thought.

"And you, Tulip," continued O'Connell, who did not seem to notice the evident embarrassment of the stout broker, though it was evident from the quick, exulting flash of his eye that Stoll's confusion had not been unobserved by him, "you hesitate to reply, now, because you doubt the truth of my words—and of your own senses, for you are not blind, nor a fool—in regard to Miss Chauncy, and you have determined to learn the truth from her own lips."

Tulip could not repress a motion of astonishment.

O'Connell's lip curled curiously; a second time his guess was right.

"You do not reply, gentlemen," he said, in his quiet, easy way. "My words are true, then, since you do not deny what I have stated. Now I can save you the trouble of carrying out your resolutions by telling you that you will fail."

Again, Tulip and Stoll looked at each other with eyes full of wonder.

"Montgomery will not give you, Stoll, one single inch of vantage, and the fair Frances, Tulip, will treat you in a most scornful manner and will refuse to satisfy you in any one particular." O'Connell spoke as lightly as if he were relating a pleasant jest, and yet his words were like hands playing upon the life-chorus of two human hearts.

"And as you can read the future so well, can you tell us what we will do after we meet with these disappointments?" asked Tulip, in a tone slightly sarcastic.

"You will come to me and accept my assistance. Then we will form the League of Three and fight this single man," replied O'Connell, firmly.

"You are sure of this?" and a light laugh came from under Tulip's mask, as he asked the question, yet the ring of the laugh sounded hollow and false.

"Yes," and the Irishman spoke with a



"Come, gentlemen, the seals—three drops of blood!" cried the man in white.

confident air. "But see, there are your birds," he continued. "Yonder is Montgomery searching through the throng as though looking for some one, and there in the corner of the room, seated, is Miss Chauncy. Now, gentlemen, try your luck, and within a quarter of an hour you will own that I am a true prophet."

For a moment the two stood, irresolute. Then Tulip took a few steps in the direction of Miss Chauncy, and then paused, and turned, as if to put a question to O'Connell. "You will find me on the balcony, outside, admiring the moon," the Irishman said. Again Tulip was astonished, for O'Connell had guessed the question that he was about to put.

"Can this man read my very thoughts?" he muttered, and then he said aloud, "very well, I will see."

"You will come, you mean?" exclaimed the Irishman, laughing.

Tulip turned away without replying. In truth his brain was bewildered. He loved Frances Chauncy as few women in this world are loved. By day and night he dreamed only of the moment when he should have the right to fold her to his heart and call her his forever. And now a great gulf—as deep as his love and as broad as his despair—had opened between him and the object of his love. If the words of O'Connell were true—if he could believe the evidence of his own eyesight—she was false to the vows that she had sworn to him but a little month ago. His brain was on fire. Love and anger struggled for the mastery.

"If she is false to me," he murmured, and there was a dreadful meaning in the unfinished sentence.

Slowly, he approached the chair where sat the blonde beauty.

After Tulip's departure, O'Connell turned to Stoll, who had remained, motionless.

"And are you not disposed to 'interview' Mr. Montgomery and find out whether I have spoken truth or no?" he asked.

The German, who was, apparently, deep in thought, lifted up his head at the words.

"Yonder he is, dressed as Hamlet," and O'Connell indicated Montgomery as he spoke.

"Yes, I see him," said Stoll, slowly.

"Your interview will be a short one; you'll find him more of a 'Shylock' than a 'Hamlet' to-night," and O'Connell laughed as he spoke.

Stoll shivered. The cool words of the Irishman seemed to chill him like the touch of ice.

"You'll find me on the balcony,"

Stoll mumbled something indistinctly, and then he hurried away.

"Shallow fools!" muttered O'Connell, his lip curling in disdain, "as if it needed witchcraft to fathom the thoughts in their minds or to guess what action Montgomery or delicate Frances Chauncy will take in this matter! Montgomery despises Stoll, because it is in his nature to despise any thing that is mean and low. He has Stoll on the hip and he'll make him sweat for

what he has done. And as for the lady—there are no true women now-a-days—she is young, pretty and proud; an arrant flirt, and without the slightest bit of a heart. She has loved Tulip and has tired of him. She fancies that she now loves this Montgomery; she will hold to that fancy until she sees some one else that she will 'fancy' that she loves better. Then good-by to Mr. Montgomery. And such creatures are the ones that we men love with all our passions and call 'angels,' when, half the time, there is more of the lower world in their natures than the upper one. And yet I am as great a fool as the rest, for I love, too." And then he laughed, cynically. "How I hate this Montgomery!" he said, suddenly. "From love to hate, a quick transition and one that is made more than is dreamed of in this world. I have laid my plans skillfully. I'll pull this man down until he grovels in the dust at my feet. These two men, Tulip Roche and Herman Stoll, shall find me money. I myself have the tool wherewith to carve out my vengeance, and that tool is a woman. The old Turk was right when he said that women are at the bottom of every thing in this world. My siren shall lure him to destruction; lead him along the path that my hand will dig full of pitfalls." A hoarse laugh of triumph completed the sentence.

"It was strange that Montgomery should receive warning that danger lurked in his life-path," said O'Connell, musingly, as the words of the young man came back to his mind. "Possibly an idle jest—a masquerading joke. It is odd, though, that it hit the truth so well. Now, I'll to my post on the balcony. In a few short minutes the League will be formed, and then for vengeance on the man that I hate so bitterly! Few could guess, to look upon this gay and brilliant scene, of the terrible scheme of vengeance that is to be born here amid the gay strains of music and the joyous laugh of merry voices. In this life it is sometimes hard to tell what mountain peak conceals the volcano."

Then O'Connell slowly made his way through the merry throng of laughing masqueraders and emerged from the heated ball-room to the balcony, swept by the cool winds of the ocean and lighted up by the silvery moonbeams.

After leaving O'Connell, Stoll proceeded across the ball-room to where Montgomery stood.

The young man had been anxiously searching through the throng of maskers for the valued woman who had accosted him so mysteriously, but his search had been fruitless.

No White Witch could he find among the various groups of masqueraders.

Stoll approached Montgomery in a peculiar way. He did not proceed directly to where the young man stood, but circled round him in the crowd as if reluctant to approach him.

Montgomery, absorbed in his search for

the strange mask, did not notice the approach of Stoll.

Montgomery was perplexed.

"What the deuce can it mean?" he muttered. "It seems more like a dream than a reality. Within one month or one year, love, wealth, all will disappear—all vanish. My friends will desert me. The woman that I love will forsake me. No, no, I am a fool to give such weight to idle words. Frances Chauncy is the woman that I love, and I'd stake my life upon her faith."

Unconsciously, Montgomery was uttering his thoughts aloud. Hardly had he finished the sentence ere a clear voice whispered in his ear:

"And lose it!"

For a moment Montgomery was transfixed with astonishment. Then, with an effort, recovering from his amazement, he turned suddenly.

The voice that spoke the words was familiar to him. It was the voice of the White Witch.

But no white figure met Montgomery's eyes as he turned.

A slender female form, dressed in the dark robes of "Night," stood nearest to him.

"She may have changed her domino," muttered the young man, to himself. "I beg your pardon—did you speak to me?" he asked, of the dark figure.

The lady answered not, but with a movement of alarm retreated from him and disappeared in the crowd.

"Well, I've managed to frighten her," Montgomery muttered, with a laugh. "Evidently I got hold of the wrong person. Deuced strange where the voice came from, though."

CHAPTER V.

THE GLOVE OF SILK AND HAND OF IRON.

By the time Montgomery had finished his speech, Stoll, who had been circling round him, like a great bird of prey circles around its quarry, finally made up his mind to accost him.

"Enjoying yourself, Mr. Montgomery?" he asked, in his smoothest way.

"Sir?" said Montgomery, turning in hauteur toward the German. He had recognized the voice in an instant.

"I asked if you were enjoying the masquerade," said Stoll, a little nettled at the tone used by the young man.

"I do not see how my enjoyment or non-enjoyment concerns you in any way," replied Montgomery, haughtily.

Stoll bit his thick lip to repress the anger that he did not dare to give utterance to. The words of Montgomery cut him to the quick, but the German had little idea of what was in store for him.

"I believe that you wished to see me," said Stoll, severely. Since he was not strong enough to fight, he must bend.

"Yes, I suppose you can guess why I wished to see you, for of course you are well aware that I do not count you among the gentlemen whom I term my friends."

More gall and wormwood for Stoll.

"I suppose I know," he answered, slowly.

"Let there should be any misunderstanding upon that point, I will recapitulate the circumstances that led to this interview."

Stoll bowed assent, but bit his thick lip until the blood crimsoned his ugly, yellow teeth. It was well for him that the mask hid his face.

"By some means you became a member of my club, probably through the ignorance of the gentlemen who compose that club as to who and what you were; even in these days, when money-bags are worshiped as gods and half the world bows to a golden idol, there are some things in this world that money can not cover. In the club-room you met me; you forced your society upon me. I possessed a trotting horse, reputed to be one of the fastest in New York. That horse I kept for my own amusement, not for racing purposes, for I am neither a horse-jockey nor a 'black-leg.' You also owned a trotter. One that you fancied was the equal of mine. At least you said so, openly, and boasted that I did not dare to speed my horse against yours. Your boasts became the talk of the club. My friends became indignant and urged me to break my resolution and match my horse against yours. At last I consented to do so, provided you would put up five thousand dollars against five thousand of mine. The winner of the race to give one-half of the stake to some charitable object. And so the match was made. So far, so good. Now comes the sequel. You did not dream that I would take up your challenge, but after having made it, you could not retreat without losing caste. You did not think your horse could beat mine, but resolved to be certain. You went to my training stable on Long Island. You bled my trainer to your interest. He speeded the horse for you, and he beat the best time that your animal had ever made by some thirty seconds. You saw that in a square race you had no chance to save your money. Then, in order not to lose the paltry five thousand dollars that you had wagered, you offered my trainer a thousand dollars to allow my horse to be 'doctored,' or, in plainer words, poisoned. The poor, weak fool, who thought more of money than he did of his own conscience, agreed to poison the horse for you two nights before the race; and as the match was 'play or pay,' you thought yourself safe to humble me and save your own money. Thanks to an honest stable-boy, your scheme was revealed to me. My dishonest trainer was caught in the very act of poisoning the horse—that was last night. I was telegraphed for at once. When I arrived he confessed every thing. Now then, what shall I do? Shall I publish it to the world that Mr. Herman Stoll has sunk himself so low as to endeavor to commit a crime that will forever lose him the company of decent men; and shall I proceed against him in due course of law, and at



tempt to punish him for the outrage that he would have committed?"

Stoll's breath came thick and hard. Above all things in life he valued the opinion of the world.

"No, no, I'll do any thing you say, if you'll only hush the matter up," he gasped. "Do you know why I feel inclined to 'hush' the matter up, as you term it?" asked Montgomery.

"No, I do not," answered Stoll, who knew very well that the reason could not concern him.

"It is on account of the poor devil that your money added to betray the master who had always treated him like a man. He has a wife and family and is a poor man. Your money tumbled him down from honesty—as many a better man than he has tumbled before. Now, if I turn that man adrift on the world with his character stained, what will be his fate?"

"He'll go to the dogs, most likely," answered Stoll, coarsely.

"Exactly, and if that man does turn to evil ways, on whose soul lies the guilt? Is he the gutter one—a poor, weak fool, tempted by your money—or you, the knave, that tempted him to sin?"

"Knaves!" cried Stoll, fiercely, in sullen wrath.

"Yes, knave!" repeated Montgomery, sternly. "Were I not a gentleman—and could find in my heart to act the part of a bruiser—I'd take you by the throat and dash you down to the dust from which you sprang!"

Every muscle of Montgomery's powerful form swelled with indignation as he spoke. Stoll curbed his wrath as well as he was able. He knew that he was no match for lithe, yet stalwart, Montgomery.

"Well, what do you want me to do, for I suppose you do want me to do something; unless you wish this interview solely for the purpose of bullying a man whose hands are tied and who can't strike back?" Stoll said, sullenly.

"You are the first person in this world who has ever accused Angus Montgomery of being a bully, and I'll let that pass. As you have guessed, I do wish you to do something. The ruin of that man—whom I am about to cast out to the mercy of the world, for I can not find it in my heart to keep in my employ one who has betrayed me—hangs heavy upon my conscience. It is you who have ruined that man. I have determined to make you give him means by which for a time he can live. I don't mean that he shall go to the devil, per express. I think that with a fair chance he'll make an honest man again. You have led him into the mire of evil; it is but fair that you should pull him out again."

"What do you wish me to do?" growled Stoll, in a very unamiable voice.

"Give that man five thousand dollars to start him again in the world. With that sum he can go West, buy a farm, and become a respectable member of society once more," answered Montgomery.

"Five thousand dollars!" exclaimed Stoll, in amazement.

"That's the sum, exactly, and in addition, you must retire from the club that you have disgraced. Fulfill these conditions, and I'll hold my tongue. Refuse, and to-morrow I'll have you published in every paper in the country for the scoundrel that you are."

Stoll's wrath almost choked him, but, like the wolf in the pitfall, he felt that he was impotent to fly or fight. Above all things in life, he valued the position that he had managed to obtain in New York. He knew well that fully one-half of his associates, if not all, would turn their backs upon him were his deed to be made public. Even New York society has some self-respect, though from its action, one would not be apt to think so.

"Well, I accept, though the conditions are hard ones. Perhaps, some time, Mr. Montgomery, you may get into debt. All the ill-luck I wish you is, that your creditor may be as hard as you are in this case," Stoll said, in ill-humor.

"When I act like a scoundrel, I trust that I may be treated like one," Montgomery replied, with bitter emphasis. Stoll winced at the words.

"Send me your check for the money, and then you can consider the affair settled," Montgomery added.

"Very well," Stoll said, doggedly.

"By the way, one word," Montgomery exclaimed, as Stoll was about to turn away. "I suppose that it is hardly necessary to mention that in the future, when we meet, I would prefer that you should pass me by without noticing me. By so doing, you will spare the unpleasantness of being 'cut' by me, for I give my word that I shall never be able to see you, large as you are."

Then Montgomery passed away, and was soon lost amid the crowd of maskers.

Stoll ground his teeth in bitter rage. "Curse him!" he cried. "I'll be even with him for this, if it takes me all my life. That infernal O'Connell spoke truth. I'll join him to be revenged upon this proud Montgomery. He's waiting on the balcony. He said in fifteen minutes. He's right almost to a second."

With bitter thoughts and an angry face, Stoll took his way toward the door leading to the moonlit balcony.

Tulip Roche proceeded slowly along through the crowded room, to where Frances Chancery sat, watching the dancers.

"Good-evening," said Tulip, approaching the blonde beauty.

"Is that you, Tulip?" said Frances, languidly.

"Yes; are you tired?"

"Of moving around?—yes."

"Wasn't that Mr. Montgomery with you a moment or two ago, dressed as 'Hamlet'?"

"Yes."

"Frances, do you know I do not think that you have treated me right, lately?" Tulip said, leaning over the back of her chair.

"Indeed!—how?"

"I have heard strange reports regarding you and this Montgomery."

"Well, what have you heard?" interrupted Frances, a little more life manifest in her manner.

"That you are engaged to him."

"It is true, then, and your words to me—your vows—are all forgotten!" Tulip cried, in deep agony.

"Why, I didn't know that you were in earnest. I thought that it was only a flirtation—I never did so before with any one—we can always be friends—I—and—"

Frances came to an end in terrible confusion.

"Oh, of course it was all a flirtation," Tulip said, bitterly. "I never meant one word of what I said, when I told you that I loved you, and wished you for my wife. I only meant it as a joke—and a very pleasant one it has been, too—I—"

Tulip turned away; his voice became husky and choked in his throat.

Frances rose in confusion, and without even a farewell word, left him. Tulip fairly trembled with rage.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE DROPS OF BLOOD.

For a moment Tulip remained motionless, like one struck by sudden stupor. Then at last he found his tongue.

"Cold, false-hearted woman!" he cried in anger. "The Irishman was right; I need his aid. I'll be revenged upon Montgomery, even if it costs me my own life. Let me see! O'Connell said that I would find him on the balcony. I'll seek him at once."

Tulip then proceeded across the ball-room toward the door that led to the balcony.

At the door he met Stoll.

"Well?" questioned Stoll.

"O'Connell was right," Stoll said, moodily. "Right in my case, also."

"And are you going to accept the offer that he made you?"

"Yes."

"So am I!"

"Let us find him, then."

The two passed through the door to the balcony. At the lower end of the broad plaza, leaning on the railing and looking seaward, they saw the man they sought, Lionel O'Connell.

"There he is," Stoll said.

"Yes," Tulip answered, and then they hastened to him.

The two, absorbed in their search for the Irishman, did not notice that a slender female form, clad in the subtle robes of "Night," had followed closely upon their heels. So close, in fact, that she had overheard every word of their conversation.

The woman dressed as "Night" followed them out upon the balcony. Then, secure from observation—for the balcony held only the three men, and their backs were turned upon her—with a motion, quick as thought, she stripped the sable domino from her form, then tore the black veil from her face, and the White Witch stood revealed!

"I hold the game in my hands," she murmured, evidently under the influence of strong excitement. "Now, if I can but get Montgomery to believe my word, or if not that, to believe the evidence of his own senses, he may avoid the danger that is before him."

She watched Tulip and Stoll join O'Connell, retiring to the shelter of the doorway as she watched, so as to be secure from the observation of the three, should they chance to look in her direction.

"There is a window near them," she murmured. "By placing Montgomery at that window, he can see, if he does not hear. The window is not in the ball-room, but in the apartment adjoining. Now to find Montgomery, and, if possible, put him upon his guard."

Concealing the sable dress and veil beneath her own white robes, the mysterious woman returned to the ball-room.

She was not long in discovering Montgomery.

The young man was promenading up and down with the blonde beauty, Frances Chancery, on his arm.

"Again with that girl!" exclaimed the White Witch, in anger; "the false heart who has already forsaken Tulip Roche for him, and will in turn forsake him for some other. Why should I not let these conspirators go on and strip him of his wealth? The loss of it will save him from the fatal love of this fair-haired siren. She loves but his gold, his position, and not the man. Oh, I blush sometimes for my sex; barely one true heart among a thousand false ones. But I will save him! save him from this woman, whose false love will drive him some day to despair; save him from Tulip Roche, the treacherous friend, and from Herman Stoll, the open enemy; save him from his evil genius, Lionel O'Connell, the chief of this secret League of Three, and who is more to be feared than all the rest combined. He is both lion and snake; as brave and strong as the first, as cold and bloodless as the second. If Montgomery will only believe my words, I will give him a shield against which they shall break their lances of malice in vain."

Then, the White Witch proceeded across the ball-room, passed by Montgomery and Frances, who hung so lovingly upon his arm, and, as she passed, she touched the young man.

Montgomery turned at the light touch, and saw in an instant who it was that had passed him.

He half-turned as if to follow her on the moment, but he remembered that he had a lady on his arm and paused.

"Will you excuse me for a few minutes? Some one has just passed, with whom I wish to speak," he said.

"Certainly, but don't be long, Angus," Frances said, lovingly.

"I will return in an instant. Shall I conduct you to a seat?"

"No, I am tired of sitting down. I will promenade until you return," she replied.

With a bow, Montgomery retired from her side and followed the White Witch, who was walking, slowly, through the throng of maskers.

Montgomery soon came up with her.

"I have been looking for you."

"I know that," she replied.

"And you have avoided my search?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because a witch must be mysterious in her actions; she must not be found, easily, like common mortals."

"I have been thinking over your words, and I confess I can not understand how it is that you seem to know me so well, for I am sure that you are a stranger to me."

"You are right; I am," she said.

"How, then, can you know aught of me?"

"Did I not tell you that I am the White Witch?" she asked.

"Enough of such jesting!" he exclaimed, impatiently. "What is the meaning of all this? Is it a masquerade joke?"

"You will find that it is no jest, but sober reality," returned the White Witch, solemnly.

By this time, the two had reached a small ante-room leading from the ball-room.

The apartment was unoccupied.

"Here, then, we can speak freely," said the strange woman, glancing, searchingly, around her.

"I confess that you have strangely excited my curiosity," said Montgomery. "You have predicted strange and wonderful things; assailed the woman whom I love, and the man whose friendship I cherish."

"And yet I have spoken but the truth, as you will find in time."

"The woman that I love will forsake me?"

"Yes."

"My friend will betray me?"

"Yes, again."

"All this is very mysterious."

"And very true."

"Perhaps so."

"You will find that it is so."

"You have something else to tell me?"

"What makes you think so?"

"You touched my arm just now in passing. That was clearly a sign that you wished to speak with me, and I take it that you are too sensible a 'witch' to wish to repeat what you have already told me," said Montgomery, gallantly.

"You are right. I have something else to tell you."

"I was certain of it."

"Something to show you, perhaps."

"Fest my eyes as well as my ears, eh?" Montgomery said, with a laugh.

"Yes."

"Well, I am ready."

"You remember my former words?"

"Within one month or one year?—yes," the young man replied.

"I predicted the loss of all that you held dear in this world."

"You did."

"But I did not tell you in what way that terrible loss would come upon you."

"Probably the reason for that is, that you do not know," Montgomery said, a slight touch of sarcasm in his tone.

"You are wrong, I do know," replied the mysterious woman, quickly.

"Elucidate—don't keep me in suspense," laughingly said the young man.

"One word does that."

"And that word?"

"Woman!"

"Oh, then it is a woman who is to bring all these evils upon me?"

"Yes."

"And yet I do not remember a single woman in this world who has cause to look upon me in the light of an enemy," said Montgomery, seriously.

"The woman who will bring you to ruin is not your enemy; she is your friend."

For a moment, Montgomery was silent. He was perplexed.

"All this seems like a joke, but, the jest is getting to be quite a serious one," he said, at length.

"For your sake, would to heaven that it were a jest!" exclaimed the masked woman, earnestly. "But, in time to come, you will find that I have only spoken the truth. This woman, who is fated to lead you to your ruin, loves you better than she does her own life—better than she does her own soul—for she would risk that soul to save you from your danger; from that danger into which her own hand must lead you."

"If she loves me, why should she lead me into danger?" asked Montgomery, who had listened to the strange words of the White Witch in utter astonishment.

"Because she is under the influence of a will, more powerful than her own. She is your slave by love; she is the slave to another, bound unto him by a stronger passion, even than her love for you. She must do his bidding and draw you, siren-like, to the path, wherein are dug the pitfalls to ensnare you. She is the creature of the chief of the League of Three."

"The League of Three?" exclaimed Montgomery, in astonishment. "Why, all this seems like a lot torn out of some old romance of ancient times. The days of leagues and secret brotherhoods have died away."

"They have revived one for your special benefit," replied the Witch. "Three men have bound themselves together to humble you, and their chief instrument will be the woman who loves you so well. One alone, in all this world, can save you!"

"And who is that person?"

"She stands before you, the White Witch. When danger comes thick around your path, I will be near to guard you. I may not be able to defeat your enemies, but, with the aid of Heaven, I will try."

"This seems like a dream," Montgomery said, in wonder.

"Behold the reality!" cried the Witch, suddenly, and she drew aside the curtains of the window by which they stood.

The window looked out upon the balcony. Montgomery's eyes beheld a strange scene. Three men were in the moonlight.

One knelt in the center, clad as a white clown; over him stood a gray monk and a gay courtier. On the balcony, before the kneeling man in white, was an open sheet of paper. Over the paper the clown held his wrist. On the wrist was a slight puncture, from which a drop of blood was slowly, welling.

A small pen-knife, its blade open, glittered in the hand of the clown.

"Come, gentlemen, the seals—three drops of blood!" cried the man in white.

The fresh ocean breeze brought the words to the listening ears of awe-struck Montgomery.

He started.

In the voice of the man in white, he recognized the clear tones of the young Irishman, Lionel O'Connell.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 49.)

Enroll Yourself.

What season so propitious as this—when all are looking out for a feast of good things—to give welcome to

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Santa Claus, with all his rich store of beautiful things which he has labored for a year to produce, can offer nothing to compare with the

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UNIVERSALITY.

BY R. H. D.

The Earth is man's inheritance;
The air, the land, the sea,
Alike are his on gilded throne,
Or man of low degree.

The Earth its endless elements makes,
Nor heeds what man may think,
Nor God's eternal purpose breaks,
And months come link by link.

The corn that's waving in the fields
Is food for great and small;
The earth of her abundance yields,
For God has sent it all.

The water in the teeming seas—
The great bowl of mankind,
Where every creature—man and beast—
Refreshes draughts can find.

The air that wraps the world all round—
The breath of Life from Heaven:
Philosophers and fools are found,
To breathe this air free given.

The simple man of quiet mind,
And he of racking brain,
By darkness equal dumbly find:
Sleep triumphs once again!

Then why should man in spirit frown
Upon his fellow-man?
God's eye o'er all is looking down,
From Europe to Japan!

And universal darkness comes:
Nor shadow, now, nor shade;
Death comes to all—once only comes,
Men fall as flowers fade.

The Phantom Princess:

OR,
Ned Hazel, the Boy Trapper.

BY CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS,
Nephew of the Celebrated Old Grizzly Adams, the
Bear-tamer of the Rocky Mountains.

CHAPTER XIII.

A JUVENILE WOOLING.

The next morning after the meeting of Miona and Ned Hazel, the lad went early to the trap that had been visited by her. He found a squealing beaver in it, but there was no kind hand near to set it free. He let it cry for a while in the hope of drawing his visitor to the spot.

But, although he waited some time, she came not, and he was compelled to kill and carry it home. The same thing took place on the second morning, but the third day saw his ardent wishes gratified.

There was no beaver in his trap, and he stood feeling as grieved and disappointed as a young gentleman could well feel whose dearest hopes had been blasted, and who was ready to lie down and die in despair.

While in this miserable mood, he raised his eyes and saw two persons standing before him. One was the Phantom Princess, and the other was Miona, her daughter.

They were standing side by side, neither dressed in white, but both in the brilliantly-colored dress of the Blackfoot squaws who stood high in the graces of their warrior husbands.

Ned blushed, and saluted them with natural gallantry. Myra said:

"I am looking for Nick Whiffles; is he at home?"

"He was there an hour ago, when I left; he is cleaning up his gun, so if you want to see him you will find him there. I will show you the way."

"No, I do not wish you to do it," said she, interposing. "I know the way there myself. I only wanted to make certain of finding him."

"I am sure he is there; it is all of two miles distant, and you'd better let me go with you," said Ned, who did not like the idea of losing the companionship of the girl, now that she had been so long coming.

"I would prefer that you should remain here," she said, quite earnestly. "I wish to see him on your particular business, and wish no one else near."

"You don't suppose I would stay near, while you were talking," said the lad, reproachfully.

"No; but I shall leave Miona here until I return, and, as she says you and she are acquainted, I had hopes that you would be willing to remain and keep her company."

"Oh! I'll do that!" exclaimed Ned, his face glowing with delight. "I have my gun with me, and I will take the best of care of her."

"Don't be gone too long," said the young maiden, as her mother started to move away.

"I will be back by noon," she replied, as she kissed her good-by, and speedily vanished in the forest.

"I only wish it was night," thought Ned, as he realized that he was alone with the one of whom he had been dreaming day and night, ever since he had first met her.

But he felt certain of several hours with her, and a sense of pleasurable delight came over him, as he suspected that Miona was quite willing to spend that time in his company.

Innocent and pure-minded as was Miona, and ignorant, too, of the great emotion of love, she was artless and unembarrassed. Ned, despite his backwoods training, was naturally polite, his genuine goodness of heart resembling, in a great measure, the kind nature of Nick Whiffles.

"I am so sorry for mother," said the girl, as the two unconsciously walked away in the direction of the river.

"Why, what's the matter with her?"

"Something dreadful—she would not tell me what—but she has done nothing but cry and pray ever since we started from home. I saw the Indians scowl at her, and several of them seem to be angry about something; but she cries so much that I have been crying, too."

And her pretty eyes filled with tears, while Ned wanted to comfort her, and wasn't exactly certain how it should be done.

"I didn't see that any thing much was the matter with her," he said. "She wasn't crying when she went by here."

"Because she has wept so much that she can not, for I am glad Nick Whiffles is at home, for if she had been disappointed in seeing him, I don't know what she would

high up on that limb. If old Nick hasn't lost his cunning, he wouldn't want a better chance for barking you."

The piece was brought to his shoulder, and his eye ran along the barrel for an instant, when there was a sharp, not over-loud explosion, and the tiny animal flew several inches above the limb upon which it was perched and dropped like a chunk of wood to the ground.

The hunter, without stirring from the log upon which he was sitting, deliberately reloaded his piece, and then walked to where the squirrel was lying. Picking it up he turned it over several times in his hand, and smiled as he saw there was not a wound upon it.

The unerring bullet had struck the bark directly beneath the belly of the animal, and sent up a shower with such violence as to fatally stun the creature, without breaking its skin.

"The piece is good, and Nick Whiffles' eye is still true. Here, Calamity, you've had your breakfast, but you can take this by way of a lunch."

With which he tossed it to the pup standing at his side. As he did so, the capacious jaws of the dog opened, and it was cleverly caught between them. There was a crunching sound, and the next minute it had disappeared down his gullet.

"There ain't much symptoms of your appetite failing, pup," remarked the hunter, as he turned toward his cabin. "I don't think you'll ever die that way."

Casting his eye to the left, he saw his horse, Shagbark, lazily cropping the grass, the picture of contentment. Setting down his rifle just within the door, Nick proceeded to a large, old-fashioned box in the corner, which he opened with a rusty key that he carried about him.

Within were a number of bottles, a few Indian trinkets, and a bundle of clothes, that had belonged to a little child. There were the tiny shoes, the stockings, a handsome dress, apron and linen.

Nick was thoughtful, and his usually joyous face was sad and downcast. He held up the articles to the light, and examined them with the tenderness of a parent who had buried her child, and was now looking over the relics left behind.

Then garments were around Ned Hazel, when I found him floating in Elk River in the canoe. I s'pose some mother has sewed 'em together, and if she's living, she is still shedding tears over the boy that has never come back to her again. I feel that I have done wrong in not finding the real owner of Ned. I did try, but all the time I was praying that I wouldn't learn any thing, and I didn't. I order tried harder; much as I love the lad, there's somebody somewhere that's got a better claim to him than I have, and if the good Lord will guide me, he shall be given back to them that he belongs to. I love him, as much as his own father or mother kin—but I've no right to keep him in the woods, when a youngster of his parts is sure to make his mark in the world."

More than once while communing in this style, he brushed the moisture from his eyes, and then he attentively studied some marks upon the linen.

These marks were simply the initials "E. M." and beyond question they were the initials of the boy who was known as Ned Hazel.

Nick Whiffles possessed little, if any, book-learning; but he was able to identify these.

"I s'pose they stand for the lad's name. E might mean Ed or Ned, and that's why I called him so. What M means, I can't figure. I didn't dare take any name beginning with that letter, for fear I might hit his ginocchio figure-head, and his owner get on his track. So, he had such a pretty pair of hazel eyes, that I called him Ned Hazel. Hello, Calamity, what is it?" he exclaimed, starting up, as though detected in some guilty thing, as his dog bounded into the cabin with a whine. "Some one coming, eh? I must keep 'em out of here."

Nick was generally self-possessed at the most trying times, but he was greatly embarrassed at this moment. Without placing back in the box the precious articles he had been examining, he let them fall to the ground, and catching up his rifle, hurried to the outside.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, as he encountered the Phantom Princess, almost upon the very threshold, and feeling the obligations of hospitality, he retreated a step or two, and invited her in.

"No," said she, halting where she stood, and seating herself upon the log that he had vacated only a few minutes before; "the day is pleasant, the sun warm, and I will sit here."

"Just as you please," said Nick, not a little relieved, as he seated himself beside her, but at a respectful distance; "you know my cabin is at your service, and I'll do any thing in the world for you."

"I believe it, Nick, and I have come to ask you to do the greatest service one being can do another."

"On with it, then."

And Myra Bandman then proceeded in a deliberate and almost emotionless voice, to relate her story. My reader has already learned it, so that it need not be repeated here.

The hunter, listened, without a word or exclamation, until she was through.

"And now," she added, in conclusion, "I will tell you what I want of you. Hugh has been condemned to death, and the only human being who can extricate him from his fate is you."

"You are a sort of princess," replied Nick, leaning upon his rifle, and looking down to the ground in his gravest manner; "haven't you got the power to free him?"

"I could if it wasn't for one thing. The building in which he is now lying is the Death Lodge. Any person who is placed there is condemned to death already, and it is a part of the Blackfoot religion that he shall not escape. They will not loose him, even for me."

"Has any thing been tried on the critics?"

"Enough to know that neither he nor I can do any thing. He was the bearer of a message from Mr. Mackintosh to Woo-wol-na, our chief, and when I took the chief to the lodge, Hugh delivered it with all the impressiveness at his command, and then I added my counsel to let him go free, lest we should be visited with the vengeance of the Hudson Bay men; but all produced no effect upon Woo-wol-na; I had lured my husband on, and he had been captured and brought in. Coming as a prisoner, it is decided that he must die as a prisoner. Oh! how I have prayed, night and day, since then; but the most that I can do is to get the chief to postpone his death a few days."

"Does he know you're his wife?"

"No; I have not told him that."

"Why not?"

"It would only work ill; he would be put to instant death the moment they discovered that. Hugh knows it, and he has been careful to keep the secret to himself."

"What's your fee?" continued Nick; "do you think I kin talk Woo-wol-na into the idee of letting him go?"

"No one can do that; nothing less than a hundred armed men could do that."

"What do you think I kin do, then?"

"With the help of Heaven, you must manage to release him by means of strategy. You have a wonderful cunning in such things; you have befriended many men in distress, and I have been told that more than once you have rescued prisoners, almost at the moment of death."

"I don't deny I've had a good streak of luck, in years past, in that sort of business; but this ere thing has a harder look than any thing of the kind that I ever took hold of."

"Don't say, oh, my friend, that there is no hope."

"I ain't said that; my principle is not to give up a chap, even after his hair has been raised, and the critters are yelling after him. I don't give up hope till a man has gone clean under, sure."

"Oh! what a relief your words are!" said Myra, rising to her feet and standing in front of him. "Will you do what you can, Nick, to befriend me?"

"Will!" was the firm and ready reply.

CHAPTER XV.

WILL HE SUCCEED?

NICK WHIFFLES NOW MADE MYRA BANDMAN sit down upon the log again, while he questioned her freely and closely.

How was the prisoner guarded? Was there any one time more favorable than another to attempt a piece of strategy? Could the appliance of sudden, unexpected force accomplish it? Was Woo-wol-na to be frightened by any threats? Once outside the Death Lodge, how far must the prisoner go before reaching the shelter of the wood? Was there any reason to believe that the Blackfeet suspected that the Phantom Princess had any intention of befriending the man by action, as she had already done by word? Did any of them know that she had gone to see him? Were her movements watched? Had any of the red-skins manifested any different disposition toward her on account of the favorable words she had uttered? Did Miona, her daughter, know any thing of the identity of the captive? How long a respite was conceded to him?

Such, in substance, were the questions proposed by the trapper, and to them he received, in brief, the following answers:

There were always three fully-armed warriors, at least, guarding the approach to the Death Lodge, and it was by the permission of these sentinels that she herself had secured admission to him, none of them knowing the meaning of her interview with him. Beyond question, the most favorable time to befriend him was at night, as the cover of darkness was an advantage not to be compensated by any thing else. A sudden dash into the lodge by several men might succeed in getting the prisoner away before the alarm could become general; but several men were needed to accomplish this, and there was no time or means for procuring these.

Woo-wol-na was not to be intimidated by any threats, and all time spent in such attempts would be worse than thrown away. If by any possibility the outside of the Death Lodge could be reached by Bandman, he had only a short distance to run across the clearing to reach the forest, when, if the night was pretty dark, there was a chance of his getting away. It was hardly possible that any of the Blackfeet suspected the relation between Myra and her husband or that she had any real purpose of befriending him. She was so accustomed to coming and going at will that no one would suspect her errand in going up Elk River and she was satisfied that no one was watching her movements.

But the earnest efforts of Myra to befriend the hapless captive, she had every reason to believe had won her the dislike of a number of the villagers. Woo-wol-na himself had given unmistakable evidence of his displeasure. Miona knew nothing at all about the matter. Should Bandman remain in the power of the Blackfeet he could not possibly escape death more than three days longer at the furthest.

"Another thing," continued Nick, when these questions had all been proposed and answered, "have they got Hugh tied up?"

"I am sorry to say they have; he was left free until after I saw him and then he was bound hand and foot."

"That's good; I'm glad to hear that," replied the trapper, emphatically; and, noticing the look of surprise upon the face of the lady, he added, "I say it's good because if they've got him tied up, they ain't apt to watch him so close, and then we've got all the more chance to untie 'im."

"I do not see how that can be done," said Myra, "for no one can remain in the lodge long enough to unfasten his bonds, without attracting the notice of the sentinels."

Nick Whiffles smiled in his most benignant manner and pointed to Calamity, who was seated on his haunches in front of them.

"There's the animal that's done the thing a dozen times in his lifetime. If it hadn't been for him, I'd gone under long ago, when I was tied hand and foot by the Sioux, and when he slipped in between a half-dozen of the varmints, at night by the camp-fire, and chewed 'em loose."

The face of the Phantom Princess lit up with hope.

"Can it be possible? I never dreamed of such a thing. There are so many dogs in the village that yours could pass to and fro without alarming the Blackfeet. Then when the cords were all unfasted Hugh could make a dash out of the door, and, favored by God, he might escape."

"Hold on," said Nick, in whose head the scheme was beginning to take shape; "we must try and get the varmints away from the lodge, if only for a dozen seconds; if we can't do that, I don't see the first chance of Hugh giving 'em the slip."

The face of Myra saddened again, for the words of the trapper sorely disheartened her.

"You don't see how it can be done, but I think I do."

"Then every thing is arranged," said she, brightening up again.

"No; it ain't," was the response; "after it's all understood between us, then Hugh has got to get the hang of things; he's got to know what to do, and when to do it, and when to get the second, or it's all up with us. Can you see him again?"

"It is doubtful."

"If there's any other way of doing it, it will be better. Do you know how to write?"

Suddenly asked Nick, turning his head toward his companion with such an earnest expression that she smiled, as she answered: "Certainly."

"I'll get you a piece of bark, and then you must scratch on it, with a sharp stone, that the pup has come to chew off his cords, and that the minute the animal comes out he's to follow him, and rush straight for the woods—can you do that?"

"Of course."

"Well, then, I don't know but what we might as well be off, as we need all our time."

Nick rose to his feet, and with his rifle slung over his shoulder, started in the direction of the river, the lady and Calamity following him. He was so occupied with what she had told him, that he forgot to close the door of his cabin, and never once thought of the baby-clothes that he had left out, exposed to the view of any one who might chance to drop in during his absence.

As they walked along they kept up their converse about the all-important matter. Nick showed no impertinent curiosity about the history of Myra and her husband; his whole mind was centered upon the task he had undertaken—that of freeing Hugh Bandman from his hapless captivity.

A general plan had already taken shape in his head, but as he meditated upon it, he saw more and more clearly the difficulties, that were so great as to be almost insurmountable.

The Blackfeet were always vigilant, and the fact of Bandman being an inmate of the Death Lodge shut out all hope of further reprieve or liberation.

Nick believed it possible that he might reach the wood, but the greatest danger was then, when the alarm should occur. The pursuit would be so quick and fierce, that in the moonlight discovery and recapture seemed inevitable.

This was the difficult point to be gotten over, and it was the one which gave him such concern, as he made his way through the wood, talking, in an absent sort of way, with the hopeful, doubting, fearing woman, whose impatience constantly carried her ahead of both him and his fast-walking dog.

When the river was reached the canoe was gone. The Princess looked around somewhat impatiently, and then called the name of her daughter. The latter heard her, as I have shown, and instantly replied, while she and Ned Hazel made haste to return.

Soon the canoe was discerned rapidly crossing the stream, with the two in it, anxious not to keep them in waiting.

"Ned," said Nick, as the lad stepped ashore, "I shall be gone several days, and I want you to wait home for me."

"All right," was the cheery response.

The boat put off again, with the three in it, and Ned stood on shore waving them a good-by, so long as they were in view; and then, when they disappeared from sight, he turned about and made his way toward his cabin-home.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 46.)

The College Rivals:

THE BELLE OF PROVIDENCE.

BY DR. WM. MASON TURNER.
AUTHOR OF \$50,000 REWARD, THE RUBY KING, MARCEL VANE, MARKED MINER, ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT MADELINE HEARD AND SAW.

LATE on the same evening, Madeleine Fleming, unattended, issued stealthily from her father's mansion, and took her way up North Main street. She drew her cloak around her, and dropped her veil over her face.

No one paid special attention to the maiden, and no one knew her, for she brushed right against Stephen Smith, who was striding independently along, smoking a rather bad-flavored cigar.

Madeline breathed freer; she had confidence in her disguise. She did not halt at all, but hurried along toward the house designated in the letter of warning.

She paused at the little dark alley, leading down to the dwelling, cast a rapid glance around her, and, without hesitating longer, boldly trod along the gloomy way. Ten paces on to the right, on the north side, she suddenly halted; for there on a dingy, narrow, dirt-begrimed door, was an old-fashioned brass knob, and by the uncertain flicking light of an adjacent lamp, she managed to read on that plate:

"MADAME FELICE DUPLICITE, Clairvoyant."

The girl had gone too far now to retreat. Summoning all her resolution, she tapped lightly on the sooty panel.

There was no response.

Madeline waited a minute, and rapped again.

Still no answer.

The girl's heart fluttered at the strange position in which she was placed; and, frightened at the loneliness of the place, she was about hurrying away.

But then a faint light flashed over the transom-window of the door, and the bolt was turned.

A coarsely-clad negro woman stood there.

"What you want, missus?" she asked.

"Does Madame Duplicite live here?" asked Madeline, tremblingly.

"Yes, she do; but you can't see her less you send in your name first; them's the Madame's orders."

"Very good then; my name is—Madeleine Fleming," said the young girl, in a low voice.

"Well, jest wait one minute, and I'll tell her."

The woman was gone but a moment when she returned, saying:

"Walk in, Miss; the Madame was somewhat expecting you."

Instantly a sharp, querulous voice inside, responded:

"Come in."

Then the negress gently opened the door, and pushed Madeleine forward into the room. Seated before a table, on which lay a human skull, an hour-glass, and a well-thumbed chart of the heavenly bodies, was a thin old woman with long, gray, elfin locks, and a dark, scarred face. Behind a pair of old-time horn-rimmed spectacles flashed a pair of piercing black eyes.

The old woman's form was bent and bowed. She seemed, at least, seventy years of age.

"Well, Madeleine Fleming, what would you have of me—the old clairvoyant?"

Madeline was startled at the sharp, shrill voice, but she answered at once—for where a woman's heart is interested, she can speak. "I'll tell you in a few words, Madame," she stammered, in low, hesitating tones. "I received a letter to-day from some unknown source, telling me—that—that my lover was false to me! It also told me—this letter—that you could tell me more of him. I am come!" and the poor girl gazed anxiously at the old, wrinkled, tawny face before her.

"Ah!" ejaculated the old creature, with something like a chuckle, "I can tell you of any thing, girl! But before these lips are opened, tell me your age, and drop gold into my palm; a half-angle, too, or I speak not!"

Silently, tremblingly, Madeleine drew a golden coin from her pocket, and let it fall into the woman's open palm.

The fingers of that hand did not close greedily upon the precious metal; they simply shut on it. Then the money was quietly transferred to some receptacle beneath the old hag's girdle.

"Good, my girl! Now interrupt me not, but listen."

For several moments the old clairvoyant bent her head over the table, and muttered to herself incoherently, inaudible sentences. At length she raised her head.

"Listen, Madeleine Fleming!" she began, in a solemn, measured voice. "Heed well the words of one who sees clear! You ones had a lover; nay, nay, so soon to interrupt me! His name—Fenton Thorne, a student then and now—"

Madeline started violently, and tottered backward; but she recovered herself.

"He loves you no longer!" continued the old soothsayer. "He heard rumors, true rumors, Madeleine Fleming, of your father's embarrassments. Start not, my child, for all this is locked in my bosom."

"The young man has turned his thoughts to the richer, and no less lovely, Myra Hoxley. Nay, nay, give not way; bear up, my child. For, after all, this may be for you a good riddance. If the youth, for money, be false to the one, will he not be the same to the other? Now listen: this night, at nine o'clock, stand on the opposite side of the street from the Hoxley mansion. Look through the blazing window, and you will see Fenton Thorne, holding the hand of Myra Hoxley in a mimic marriage ceremony. A mock-marriage, soon to be followed by genuine bands of wedlock! Go, Madeleine Fleming, and see for yourself the perfidy of this man; and seeing, be a wiser woman. Adieu, my child, for the stars say nothing more."

Blinded, stunned and scarcely breathing, Madeleine Fleming staggered helplessly down-stairs—then out into the cold, desolate, rayless street.

Twilight had long since deepened into night, and the moon had sunk beneath the cumulous clouds in the west.

Eight o'clock came, half-past eight; and at nine—hidden under the heavy shades of the trees on the opposite side of the street—Madeleine Fleming pushed back the thick veil which had covered her haggard face, and gazed across through the half-open shutters of the Hoxley mansion.

Then of a sudden the shutters were flung open, and the light streamed out into the dark street.

The sight which Madeleine Fleming at that moment saw, made the warm blood pulsing through her youthful frame flow back in wild, suffocating torrents to the heart.

Her brain reeled fearfully, and a wild, wailing scream broke from her bloodless lips. She threw her nerveless hands up in the air and staggered back.

But a strong arm was suddenly held out to her, and a tall figure sprang to her side.

"Come, come with me, my poor girl! Lean on me, and trust me! Come; I, too, have seen all!"

And Stephen Smith, the Kentuckian, with warmth, tenderness and sympathy in his manner, drew the maiden's trembling arm within his, and as a deep-breathed anathema escaped his lips, walked away, half-bearing in his arms the fainting form of Arthur Fleming's daughter.

CHAPTER XXI.
UNDER THE BAN.

FOR many days, and weeks, Madeleine Fleming was like one crazed. Her hunched face grew thin and haggard, and dark circles, betokening grief and agony of mind, surrounded her eyes.

Her father, over whom, by this time, a continual cloud of despondency seemed to have settled forever, noticed the roses fading from the cheek, and the rayless, lack-luster eyes of his sad, thoughtful daughter.

The old father spoke to his child, but she evaded him and replied incoherently, always endeavoring to cheer away his gloomy feelings. Yet there was no heart, no spirit, in her efforts, and Madeleine did not convince her father that she was happy, as she said.

Then the half-distracted old man thought that his daughter was brooding over the sad news he had told her some time since, regarding his impending bankruptcy.

The cloud settled deeper upon Arthur Fleming, and every day he prayed, with increasing earnestness, for the safety and successful return of the Rover.

He often thought of his former happiness and contentment, when the glad days slipped by almost unperceived.

But those days had gone by; the mansion in which Arthur Fleming lived was simply a gilded palace, belonging to others! The food which supplied his table was purchased with the money of his creditors.

The cloud, freighted with woe and trouble, had long since appeared, small at first, it is true, but portentous and ominous, and momentarily increasing.

And Arthur Fleming, though he knew the cloud would swell in its proportions, and rise higher toward the zenith, as his own fortunes went down in inverse ratio, yet he chose to turn his back on that ominous bank looming up. He would not face it; and with his eyes closed, and head bent down, he refused to see the black shadow at his feet.

Now, at last, his whole horizon was covered over, and the old man was forced to open his eyes to see his way.

In a new battle with life, in a new combat for money, Arthur Fleming feared the result. He feared, on account of his daughter; in her he was wrapt up. He was beyond the middle of life; indeed, his autumn leaves had fallen, and his feet were treading the dreary confines of the joy winter-land of life.

The father feared another conflict for gold—feared it for Madeleine's sake.

The stake he was playing for was lofty; but the game was fearfully hazardous.

Should his hopes be realized—should the gallant old Rover return in safety—all would be well; but if disaster should overtake his venture, he and his daughter would be in guile in ruin; the wolf would force his way through the walnut doors of the fine mansion, and stand, lank and ravenous, in the hall!

These terrible calculations between success and failure, told on the old man's frame, and his speech became a little wild. Madeleine had observed the change in her father with anxious eye and fearing spirit. This had added to her own heart-trouble, had weighed her down, had given her sleepless hours and nights, and thin, wan cheeks.

Since that fatal evening, on which the maiden had consulted the old clairvoyant, and afterward under the gloom of the elms opposite the Hoxley mansion, had seen through the open window, that spectacle which made her reel, Madeleine Fleming had been a changed creature.

Apart from her father's troubles, she had her own.

Stephen Smith had called several times at the Fleming mansion, and was always readily admitted. Between him and Madeleine there had been earnest and soul-deep conversations and interchanges of thought and surmise. On such occasions the maiden was always more cheerful. She hung as confidently on the words of the Kentuckian, as on more occasions than one, she had clung to his stout right arm.

Fenton Thorne's name was seldom mentioned at these conferences; whenever it was, it was with trembling by Madeleine; with a scowl and a suppressed malediction by Stephen Smith.

Arthur Fleming, so enwrapt in his own thoughts, which at times were absolutely hideous, and so engrossed in the fate of the old Rover, paid but little heed to Stephen Smith's rather frequent visits, though the anxious father scanned every day the white face of his daughter.

For some time, Fenton Thorne—now a Sophomore—had not put in an appearance at the home of his betrothed. It is true, however, that he had written warm, loving notes to Madeleine; but he had received no replies.

Between the young man and his chum, strange to say, a decided coolness had sprung up. This, to a great extent, was occasioned by Stephen Smith's persistently rude and snarling demeanor.

Fenton Thorne, in all frankness, had asked him the meaning of this, and the reply which he received had sent the blood tingling through his cheeks.

But Stephen Smith had not noticed the wrath of his friend, and had put him gently, yet firmly, aside.

The chums at once separated—Fenton, independently, seeking quarters in Hope College, and Stephen quietly and unconcernedly remaining in his old room.

The whilom friends frequently came in contact, and always spoke, distantly, it is true, though Fenton Thorne's large, expressive eyes often affectionately watched the form of his dear old chum, and once or twice, those eyes had filled with tears.

Fenton Thorne was ambitious; he knew his own powers, and some time before he had privately made an application to the Faculty for a premature examination, to allow him to enter the Junior class. He studied diligently, scarcely taking time for meals, and almost entirely disregarded exercise.

Stephen Smith had noted the young fellow's industry, though he knew not the occasion; for Fenton had studiously kept it back, intending it as a surprise, if he succeeded, as a secret if he failed.

The Faculty had readily granted the application.

At length the young man bethought him, not that he had forgotten her, of Madeleine. Then he remembered his neglect. Then Madeleine's strange silence recurred, with double force, to him, and a sickening feeling grew over his heart.

That same evening he went to the Fleming mansion, and rung the bell. His summons was soon answered; but John, who went to the door, looked somewhat embarrassed as he saw who it was.

The young man noticed this, and produced his card at once.

Without inviting him to enter, John took the card and entered the parlor, which was brilliantly lighted, leaving the young man standing at the door.

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL

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All communications, subscriptions, and letters on business, should be addressed to BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS, 85 WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK.

VERY SOON!

We shall start, in another issue or two,

Oath Bound; OR THE FALSE BRIDE.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL,
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET CRESSANT," "SHADOWED HEART."

A story of to-day, of city and country, of peculiar and somewhat startling features. The popular author has quite excelled herself in this story—rich in plot, persons and potency of its "situations," will command notice, and immensely delight those who seek for fiction not tainted with 'Laura Matilda' perfections, but alive with a real Charles Reade's strength.

Contributors and Correspondents.

Will try and find place for poems, "Forever Silent" and "Voice from the Sea"—Also, for sketch, "Legend of Hunter's Cave."—Will use "General Ward," "The Game that did not Win," "The Old Valley," "The Wife's Fate," "Young Hearts are Old Hearts," "The Boy Witness," "How Like Bun- dy Pooled the Sioux," "A Night on the Blue Ridge," "Old Joe's Stratagem," "Fight with a Rattlesnake," "J. L. Masquerade," "Elmore's Revenge," "Hunted."

MSS. not available: "Consin Mollie," "Prince of Puppies," "No News," "A Day of Grace," "Three Rings," "Sarah Montrose," "Lover," "Mead Me Star Light," "On Her Me," "A Night in the Chapparral" (stolen), "The Sister's Pledge," "Lost Love," "How She Thwarted Them," "The Lover's Trials," "MSS. returned: "Norma's Stratagem"—no stamps; "A Ghost Story," by same author; "Brief Sketches," by F. H. W., not available and no stamps. "Robber's Fate," returned.

Mrs. C. G. Crowe will find the required information on flower culture in the catalogue of Peter Henderson, New York, and James Vick, Rochester, N. Y.—both noted flower culturists. Now is the time to make your selection of seeds.

"Simon Del. P." Mr. Aiken's "Witches of New York" has not been published in book form, though it well merits it. The author's fine romances which appear in the SATURDAY JOURNAL are dramatized, but can only be had in dramatic form by special arrangements with the author.

E. F. P. wants to know "how to get a girl." Go and catch her! Don't make a fool of yourself by getting angry if others pay her attentions. Such attentions are a compliment to her beauty and worth and are for her. For you to catch such a prize will require simply an exercise of good sense and the qualities of a gentleman. By conserving her tastes and happiness you forward your ends.

Geo. E. M. asks how to learn book-keeping without a master, etc. The best way to learn is to take a set of books, and learn by actual experience. A course in a Commercial College is all well enough, but no "college" can make a good book-keeper any more than a course of lectures can make a physician. Some of the best book-keepers in the city never stepped into a Commercial College. George writes a very fair hand, indeed.

S. W. Mc G.—We have a BASE BALL GUIDE for 1871 now in hand, and soon to issue, containing all necessary directions to learners and much interesting information to players; the laws of the National Club; the Averages of celebrated games played the past season, etc., etc. Price by mail, Ten Cents.

The solution of G. H.'s algebraic problem is a case of simple equation.

W. J. F.—Capt. Mayne Reid probably will not return to America soon. He is a great invalid. The last thing he wrote was "The Minister's" for the SATURDAY JOURNAL for which he will continue to write if he writes at all. We know nothing of the new Youth's magazine referred to.

To the Twenty-three readers, signing the note from St. Louis, of Jan. 30th, we say hearty thanks for the good-will and compliments expressed. The SATURDAY JOURNAL is indeed a GREAT SUCCESS. It is now one of the most praised and best read Weekly papers in the country. Our correspondents will see by announcement elsewhere that we have anticipated their wish for a good set of "The Romances of the Deep," by well-known writers, already are "on the hooks" for issue, in due course.

Will have to say my contributions by Kate L. She writes with much spirit, and with the aid of the fitness of things; but, with the art of composition she is not well enough acquainted to write acceptably for publication. Study and practice will correct this defect.

Henry Hopeful. Thank you for your good notice of the SATURDAY JOURNAL. We can not find place for the MS. submitted. Have only too much of that class of matter—a literal string of good things.

Mrs. Clara H., of Lafayette, writes to know "what is the Law of Beauty, anyhow." We have the authority of Professor Welch for saying the "law" requires that the mouth should be small and expressive; the teeth small, slightly rounded and white; the chin of moderate size, white, soft and gracefully rounded; the eye long, high opening between the eyelids, and immaculate clearness of both the white and iris. They should be large, especially in women; the cheeks moderately plump and delicately tinted; the hair fine, soft, wavy and shining; the neck white, smooth, straight and flexible; the hand and arm white, soft, long, round, tapering and delicate; and a soft, smooth, transparent, delicately tinted skin. If the ladies can not reach this standard, in all things, even with the aid of "plumbers," cotton-jute, steel springs, patent calves, etc., it is to their credit that they try hard enough, and all to please the men, you know.

John Daniels wants to be informed about the pay to circus-performers, as he has serious designs of becoming a gymnast. From inquiry of one who knows, we learn that gymnasts usually are brothers, or go in couples, as one must assist the other. They receive from \$20 to \$125 per week for the two. Con- tortionists get from \$20 to \$50 per week for kinking themselves. Clowns usually command from \$20 to \$100 per week, according to ability and reputation. A clown who is well known and popular through the country is worth more than an equally good one who is unknown, as his name on the bills is an attraction, the clown being the most important personage in the show, in the eyes of rural amusement-seekers. One noted clown has received a salary of \$1,000 per week for a season of seven months; but this included the services of some apprentices, the use of various horses and animals, and the use of his name as the ostensible proprietor of the circus with which he traveled.

Foolscap Papers

My Entry into New York.

My first entrance into New York was hardly like Washington's entrance into Trenton—hardly—neither did I go in like Franklin went into Philadelphia, with a limburger cheese in one pocket, some molasses in another pocket, and two carabuncles under my arms. There was no young maid, afterward destined to become my wife, standing in a door to see and laugh at the un-white bosom of my shirt as I was approaching, or to giggle at the reverse of it when I got by—no such a thing.

When I entered New York I had nothing in my pockets but my hands, and nothing in my stomach but my appetite. How little did I think at the time that I should one day own four blocks on Broadway! How little do I think so still!

The shoes on my feet had dwindled down to very little more than a pair of shoe-strings, and the corns on my toes, which were not at all regulated by law, gave a free matinee, and my elbows had the freedom of the city. I was, nevertheless, perfectly independent as I walked along the crowded streets, viewing objects which were entirely new and novel to me, letting on that I wasn't much interested in them, which I was, feeling contented with the superior education I carried with me, which I knew would set me far above the masses, and only ignorant to the fact of there being a very large old rag pinned to the lower rim of my jacket. It has been tenderly remarked since, that I looked like a walking rag-factory, but I am inclined to think there is a good deal of poetry in the expression. I remember one object that struck my observation heavily. It was an automaton figure in a show-window, that stood still and did nothing but open and shut its mouth. I stood still before it, perfectly lost in admiration of the working lower jaw. My eyes became riveted and clinched to it. I forgot my surroundings, and at the end of half an hour I recovered my eyes and looked around to see a large and interested crowd gazing at me, and to find that I had stood there letting my mouth open and shut precisely like the figure.

I walked away, and a few minutes afterward I happened to look around in front of a cigar store, and seeing a large, full-blooded Indian standing almost directly over me, with a tomahawk raised to strike me, I gave a yell, and struck out down street with such speed that I verily believe Vanderbilt would have negotiated for my purchase if he had seen me; and even to this day I never pass a wooden Indian without getting off the sidewalk, I have such a native horror for them. It was very interesting for me to stand and watch the people going along Broadway, and to reflect on the fact that not one of all that tide of humanity owed me a cent; but life was all before me, and my debts were all behind me, and there I made a vow to win a name which the little village I had so lately left—I couldn't bring it along—should go into the delirium tremens to hear. I determined to write that name high and dry on the scroll of fame, before which the world should pause in its triumphal march and my coming everywhere should be welcomed by salivars of artillery.—I believe I mean *salvors* of artillery. I vowed that my road should be onward and upward, however numerous the toll-gates might be on that road, or however insolent the keepers, and, fired by my noble determination, I went and hired out at a candle-factory. Yet, even then, I thought no more of being President of the United States than I might say, I do at the present time, so little do we really know of what is before us. I might, in the language of Scripture, say that ever since that time I have been traveling in the Broadway way that leads to—but, upon second consideration, I take that back, for that Scriptural phrase will hardly carry out what I want to express. Anyway, I have succeeded in becoming I flatter myself one of the greatest men of the time. You don't know how much good it does me to say this, as is right and proper, but it makes me feel like turning a hand-spring, lying down and rolling over, and not getting up till after breakfast to say it.

I still speak to common folks, except when there is company present, and never forget the importance of my present situation, for I have built myself up, commencing at the ground, and if I am far above others, it is my own fault and nobody's else.

Your nobilitated

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Author of Silent Hunter Again!

The Lights and Shades of Border and Forest life are given a vivid portraiture in the splendid story of the woods, soon to commence in the columns of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, viz:

THE AVENGING ANGELS; OR THE BANDITS OF THE SCIOTO.

Written by an author of much celebrity, this powerful serial will quite "lead the reader captive," and add another to the now long list of brilliancies which have followed fast through the columns of

THE STAR WEEKLY.

NEVER MIND.

TREAD on a woman's dress in the street, and though she will be purple with rage, and feel ready to snap your head off, she will have patience enough to reply, "Never mind." But does she mean it? No, indeed! It would be all right if she did, but she feels that you have deeply insulted her, and the memory of that wrong will be treasured up against you. If my sex would be more sensible, and not wear these "street-cleaners," they wouldn't have them trodden upon, and would be saved from the falsehood of "Never mind."

Go out visiting, and, feeling a little nervousness, drop the china cup—one of a very expensive set—filled with tea over the handsome damask table-cloth, ruining its beauty forever—don't you think a hostess must have the meekness of a lamb, and the patience of an angel to say, "Never mind, my dear, accidents will happen." That remark will be said to you, but I rather think, when she is by herself, she will say: "Plague take the stupid, clumsy creature! I don't want to see her face again!"

Uncle Johns are generally kind-hearted creatures—at least mine is—and they can bear a great deal. But, it is a little too much to have their watches used for a target, their coats to make mud-pies in, and their hats made the receptacle for candy; while they are expected to embrace their young ones all round, even though they are just

been demolishing bread and molasses. Poor men! to save themselves from being called unnatural and hard-feeling uncles, they are obliged to stand it all, and exclaim, "Never mind," when, all the while they would like to take the youngsters over their knees and spank them.

Even the poor washerwoman who has labored hard at scrubbing and cleaning, so that you may look well, is obliged to say, "Never mind," when you tell her you have not any change about you. She thinks you might have more feeling, but the poor creature must not complain or there will be no work for her. She bears her burden humbly, and mutters: "Never mind."

I had been expecting a letter through the mail, from a dear friend. It was winter and the roads were blocked up for a week. As soon as they were open, I asked a neighbor if he would get "the mail for me." He returned at night, and when I asked him if he had a letter for me, he replied: "There, Miss Lawless, if I didn't forget to ask for you."

I heaved a sigh, and answered, "Never mind." But, it was a grievous disappointment to me, and I wished that man had a more retentive memory—if nothing besides. A person has said we "should say 'never mind' under all disappointments," yet I doubt, if he had been casting sheep's-eyes at some young damsel, and she gave him the mitten, whether he would be true to his own philosophy. But, love is always an entirely different thing from anything else, and has naught to do with philosophy.

It would be a blessing if we could bear our trials in a more cheerful mood, and never mind the briars and brambles we have to scramble through.

Never mind if you are slighted, when you grow a little aged, and the younger generation are careless for your company; remember the Golden Gates are nearer, and a Friend is watching for you on the "other shore"—a Friend who will love you, for yourself alone!

Never mind if Nature has made your face plainer than that of your companions. Don't patch it up to disfigure it more, but make your heart an honest and an upright one. A noble heart is better than a handsome face.

Never mind if your high anticipations are never realized. You will have the proud satisfaction of knowing you have striven for them.

Never mind if you can not wear fine clothes; endeavor to content yourself with coarser fabrics, and remember, that an unpaid-for suit, sets not with half the grace of a paid one.

Never mind if the children do make a little noise. Think that you were once like them, and doubtless made ten times as much racket.

Never mind if some of these paragraphs come home to you, the writer herself has had the experience of many of them. She submits them to you in all kindness, even if she is,

EVE LAWLESS.

Three Sea Romances.

We have in hand, to appear in their turn, three very fine Sea Stories by noted writers of that class of literature, viz:

The Ice Fiend,

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

THE YOUNG BUCCANEER.

By a well-known writer.

A Powerful and Characteristic Story.

BY NED BUTLINE.

All of which are, each in their way, well calculated to lighten the varied interest of our paper.

A HOME-LY HINT.

Let every "marriageable young lady" (in respect to age) keep in mind that, though she speak with the tongue of a man, and is possessed with the gift of prophecy, and understands the mysteries of all languages, and all knowledges, physical and metaphysical, elemental and musical, and yet knows not how to keep house, she is unfit to become a wife and a matron. It is easy to obtain girls and women to teach schools, to keep books, to be copyists, to sell goods, to work in factories, to work as seamstresses in shops and families, to set types, say, to do almost anything thing outside of housekeeping, and yet how exceedingly difficult it is to find one who understands the culinary art, with all the other accomplishments of good housewifery, without which all the other learned acquisitions are of little worth in a wife, and with the wifely attentions, the absence of all the others will hardly be missed, for the good housewife, fitted for her sphere, is the true gentlewoman. We would not have the reader infer that we place a low estimate upon woman's literary attainments from what we have now said. Far otherwise; for we would have every "marriageable woman," especially, liberally educated in the largest sense of that phrase; that is to say, she should be instructed in the mysteries of housewifery as well as in the arts, sciences, literature, and all aesthetic accomplishments. But a "blue" who knows nothing of housekeeping, cannot help meet for any man who has a stomach as well as a soul to be cared for during his sojourn on earth. The stomach has about as much to do in the formation of the character and the reputation of a man as his creed. Hence, the cook is about as essential to the success of intellectual, moral and religious culture, as the curate.

ADVERSITY.

WHEN a man is in the noontide of prosperity the world seems only made for him, the sun shines to give him pleasure, and the heavens are spread above to delight him with their fairness. He sees no other world than his own; and his loves and emotions are too apt to narrow down and center about himself. But the night of adversity comes; the veil of darkness hangs over the earth, her greenness and promise are mostly hidden from him, but he finds that the sky above is full of stars which beckon on his deepened thoughts to more exalted hopes. He sees that every star is a mighty world, full, perhaps, of beings like himself, possessed by their own petty cares and joys—and thus his mind is led away into illimitable contemplation; eternity and the universe shame his small self-love; he finds that the worlds circle not around him, but that he is only a trifling part of the great creation, fulfilling his destiny through good and evil, waiting upon the development of the Divine plan. As he grows humble, he grows trustful; as he becomes chaste, he is really great.

THE DEAD-SURE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

BY THE "FAT CONTRIBUTOR."

INSURANCE is every thing, nowadays. If I hadn't got assurance I wouldn't attempt to assure people, I assure you. I therefore announce to the public, through the responsible and widely-circulated *Star of Journals*, the SATURDAY JOURNAL, that I am about going into the insurance business. I propose to organize myself into a company to be called the "Dead-Sure Life Insurance Company," and have called a meeting for that purpose. I give it that name because I intend to make a dead-sure thing of it—for myself.

I have observed the workings of the life-insurance business. I have seen its mistakes, and resolved to profit by them in getting up my company. I have seen how companies have occasionally exposed themselves to the necessity of paying policies to the heirs of people who selfishly and for the mere sake of gain—or, mayhap, to inflict pecuniary loss upon the company out of revenge—have gone and died.

To be sure, most insurance companies hedge themselves around with such conditions that it would seem almost impossible for a man to get out of the world and leave them liable, in any manner; yet there is, now and then, an obstinate and wholly unreasonable individual who won't die to suit the company at all, but insists on popping off in some manner unforeseen, and consequently not provided against by the regulations. This makes it bad for the company; and although they resist it in the courts, they frequently have to settle, at the end of a law-suit, expensive to the claimant, made expensive, in fact, to deter other claimants from suing.

A life insurance policy won't allow a man the privilege of killing himself. It forbids his being killed in a duel. It steps in between him and the law, and says he shall not die by the hands of justice, no matter who may be filling the office of justice at the time. It denies him the inalienable right to get drunk, unless it can be shown that it benefits his health, and conduces to longevity, and refuses him the ecstasies of delirium tremens—from humane motives, of course.

Assuredly, this is hard on the assured. Besides, he can't go either by land or sea "beyond the settled limits of the United States"—which, of course, shuts him out of several of the Southern States, where things are extremely unsettled. He must not visit parts of the United States which lie south of a certain latitude, between the first of June and the first of November, although he may be totally unable to pay them a visit at any other season of the year; and he must not pass to California or Oregon without first getting a "permit" of the company insuring him, whether he has a railroad pass or not. This, of course, is done to make him stay at home and save his money for his children.

Nor is this all. Whatever his patriotism may impel him to do, he must not enter the military or naval service of his country, nor run a steam-engine, nor break on a railroad, nor engage in the manufacture or transportation of gunpowder, nor be employed on a steam vessel, at the peril of forfeiting his policy.

As I before remarked, insurance companies, as now organized, are tolerably well protected, but I propose to have a dead-sure thing, and with that view I intend to establish the

"DEAD-SURE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY."

All policies issued by this company, under the following contingencies, will be null and void to the insured:

If the assured fights a duel and is killed.

If he isn't.

If he kills himself.

If he lets anybody else kill him.

If he "goes up" in a balloon between the first of January and the 31st of December.

If he is addicted to tight lacing.

If he goes to sea except by rail.

If he drinks Jersey Life Bitters.

If he eats anything indigestible.

If he goes to Congress without the vote of this company.

If he takes part in women's rights meetings.

If his (last) breath smells of gin "sling."

If he leaves any "last words."

If he joins a militia company.

If he don't join one.

If he handles gun, face or baking-powder.

If he is blown up by a steamboat.

If he is blown up by his wife.

If he runs a steam-engine.

If a steam-engine runs him.

If he runs for office.

If he runs at the nose.

If he dies before his premiums paid exceed the amount of assurance.

If he dies after he is forty, without giving this company one year's warning.

If he don't die at all.

If he is employed on the railroad.

If he isn't employed on the railroad.

If he dies intestate.

If he dies in liquor.

If he dyes his hair.

If he accepts invitations to drink.

If he declines them.

If he is ever caught lying west of the twenty-first meridian of longitude from Washington.

If he is ever caught lying, anyhow.

If he is ever caught in Washington.

If he is hung more than once.

If he isn't hung at all.

If he dies without the consent of this company, previously obtained and indorsed upon his policy.

The proofs of death required will be:

1. A certificate from the physician who had a hand in his death.

2. A certificate from the undertaker.

3. A certificate from some responsible resurrectionist in good standing.

4. A certificate from the assured himself, to the effect that he is really and truly dead, and no shenanigan.

Terms lower than by any other company. Agents wanted in all parts of the country, to whom we shall give fifty-five per cent of all premiums collected and no questions asked. Special arrangements made with ex-officers of other companies who "understand the ropes" and know how to make a big thing. Ministers on small salaries, school teachers, and charity collegiate students having "scruples of conscience" need not apply. Address all communications through the publishers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, to

President, Vice-President, Acty, &c., of the D. S. L. I. Co.

THE FOUNTAIN'S VOICE.

BY LOUIS G. GREENWOOD.

Faintly through the evening starlight—
Was it murmur of the sea
That through air now dewy laden,
Seemed calling to the spirits that be?

At the garden's turn of marble,
There I thought this voice to find;
There it was not, still 'twas calling,
Borne upon the soft, south wind.

Hastening to the trellised bower,
Where the nightingale sang sweet,
But another voice was ringing,
From some distant, lone retreat.

I stood still, and silent keeping,
Soon that pealing note I heard;
Nature lay so sweetly sleeping,
'Twas not human, nor from bird.

Startling at the solemn swelling,
Of that note once so true and clear;
What could mean this sad win-changing,
Whether far or whether near?

Lo, the fountain's marble Hebe,
In the moonlight's argent gleam,
Poured the crystal dew of twilight,
Mirrored in the water's sheen—

Mirrored in the water's wavelets,
Stirred by dewy zephyrs light;
Bearing odors from the flowers,
On the weary wings of night—

She it was, who in the fountain,
Murmured, cried aloud to me;
Now uprising—so enchanting,
Now in sorrow, now in glee.

A Woman's Love.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

SHE was a Scotch lassie and her name was Winnie Campbell; that was all I could find out about her, except the facts so patent to every one who had seen her; that is, that she was pretty and graceful and winsome.

And yet because she was pretty, with her tawny, bronze-gold hair, and her clear, bright gray eyes, and her pearl and ruby complexion, I hated her; I hated her so fiercely, that, had I learned she was dead, I am quite confident I should have clapped my hands for joy.

I saw it was all because she was so lovely, so entrancing; because, if Winnie Campbell had been less so, then Norman Chandos would not have begun by admiring, and ended in loving her.

Yes, he loved her; who had sworn his fealty so many times to me; who had left his kisses on my hair and folded his two dear arms around me.

I know I worshipped him too much. I know it was a mad, idolatrous sort of affection I entertained for him, yet I could not help it; nor, I think, could any woman have helped it; and that is the only excuse I can find in my heart for Winnie Campbell.

My Norman was a god among men: not a god in mere physical beauty, and royal grace of carriage, though in these none could surpass him.

He was so much above his fellows in his tender, appreciative love for woman; his loving superiority of devotion, his consciously proud boldness in giving his love.

He was not rich—he was too generous to hoard up money when there were so many hundred avenues toward the wanting poor; and so he went on in the path he had laid out for himself, for which he had toiled years to perfect himself, to add a grace to his already glorious art.

"Dr. Norman Chandos." That was the name on his office-door, the sight of which, and sound of which were so unspeakably precious to me.

He was just the man, above all men, to be a physician; and I once thought when I lay ill, and they called Doctor Chandos in—that was the very first time I ever saw him, and I loved him from that moment with a never varying intensity—that it was more bliss to die, under the tender, solicitous care, the confident, almost stern skill, the kindly, genial ways of such as he, than to be won back to life by less perfect hands.

Perhaps some may think I am an enthusiast; I have to say, first, surely, you never could have known Norman Chandos; second, I tell you what I once possessed, in holding the love of

but one person, because he was well acquainted with the Reverdy's, who accompanied her.

"That? Why, that is our entrancing guest from New York, Miss Campbell, a young Scottish lady visiting the Reverdy's." How perfectly lovely she was as she walked quickly up to the house; I took in her exquisite toilet at a glance, and I know Dr. Chandos did the same. Some sort of a black dress it was, heavily trimmed with black satin quillings; a bright blue sash knotted around her tiny waist; a fashionable hat of blue crepe, with a pink rose, contrasting vividly with her snow-white complexion.

She wore her skirts quite short, even for a walking-dress; and I've often wondered whether she knew how Dr. Chandos went into raptures over pretty feet. At any rate, she wore "ones," I am sure, and her instep was arched faultlessly.

She came up the steps of the piazza, and into the parlor, before the Reverdy's.

At the door she saw me in the bay-window; and no one can convince me she did not know that Norman was there, too; prettily as she blushed in her confusion when she saw him.

"Oh, Miss Horton, I do so feel ashamed of being late."

She had caught my hand and went impulsively on—a pretty, *naïve* sort of impulse—when she looked up and saw Norman, then stopped suddenly.

"This is Dr. Chandos; allow me to present to him Miss Campbell."

She laughed, and extended her hand—a little hand, with a bright blue kid-glove on; a heavy golden bracelet above that; then a short, perfectly rounded arm, exposed by the open sleeve that fell from it, whose dense blackness lent a pearly whiteness to her fair flesh.

"I am sorry I interrupted you, Dr. Chandos. You must pardon me."

Norman's smile was so sweet and winning when he answered:

"There is no apology needed at all. I am sure May and I feel honored by so charming an intrusion."

I can't tell why, but his courteous language seemed to hurt me; he, who was always so ready with a gracefully-turned compliment. Perhaps it was the coquettish glance of Winnie's eyes; but I think it was more the almost ardent admiration I saw in his face.

"We can start now, Miss Campbell, if you are ready. I suppose Harry Reverdy's buggy is at your disposal."

She laughed at what I said, although I never knew what there was comical in my remark. One thing I did know, and that was she had splendid teeth, and a mouth that constant laughing well became.

"Isn't it curious, Miss Horton? Harry Reverdy has been engaged to Kate Seaford for this picnic, so poor I am compelled to take a seat in the provision-wagon, walk to the park, or return home disconsolate."

"There is no need of that at all, Miss Campbell. My phaeton is entirely at your disposal, and May has driven Siren so many times, I think you can trust yourself to her. Bob can bring him back to the office."

Miss Campbell shrugged her shoulders a little doubtfully.

"I certainly am very much obliged, Dr. Chandos, but I never dare to ride with a lady driver. Besides, I will keep you home by that arrangement."

"I can not go at all, Miss Campbell. You had better go with May. She's very careful."

He smiled so proudly on me, that I felt I could afford to be magnanimous.

"Could you not spare a few minutes and drive Miss Campbell over? I will wait, and let Bob take me over when the phaeton returns."

"Oh, I could not think of troubling you, Dr. Chandos!"

She answered him before he had time to reply to me.

I saw a faint little flush come to Norman's cheeks.

"I think you had better, Miss Campbell. We will start immediately."

A few hasty explanations to my friends were all that was necessary, and then I watched Norman and Miss Campbell walk down the box-bordered path together.

I was getting the blues, I thought, or something was the matter, for I felt a constricted pain around my heart when I noted how Norman bent his head to talk to her, and how she kept looking up into his face with those wondrous clear gray eyes of hers.

Why did I care? Many and many a time before I had felt my heart swell with fond pride because Norman was so courteously, so elegant in the presence of ladies; and when I had seen him leaning over the chairs of other women, talking those delightful nothings, I pitied them because he did not love them, and had to force back the delicious tear that would come when I realized that he did love me; poor, insignificant me!

But now, it seemed all reversed, as if by a cruel magic. Now, as I saw him assist her in the carriage, and then seat himself beside her, I pitied myself and envied her!

From that moment my trouble began. They drove off, and then I waited for Doctor Chandos to return; and it was an hour or more before he drove up, in a great hurry.

"May, dear, I have been unavoidably detained by Miss Campbell. She was seized with a violent headache, and compelled to be taken home. It was rather fortunate she did not get to the grounds."

He was waiting by the door for me to do my hat and sash.

"I fear my patients will be incensed at my tardiness; so you'll let Bob drive you over? I'll see if I can come after you about seven o'clock."

"Norman," I said, going up to him, and laying my hands on his shoulders, "please tell me this one thing. Don't you admire Winnie Campbell very much?"

I could see a glimpse of his teeth under his mustache, as his lips parted in a smile. "And if I do, jealous May, am I to be punished?"

"No, I am punished if you admire her too much; because, Norman, I saw in your eyes the moment you met a mutual attraction. Norman, you will love her next?"

"Of all ridiculous affairs, this is the most ridiculous! Does the simple fact of my driving a lady home constitute disloyalty to my betrothed? Fie, May!"

I felt the hot blood rush to my cheeks under his keen gaze, half-tormenting, half-reproving.

"I don't know what I mean! I only know I am so afraid you may ever cease loving me! Norman, Norman, you'll never turn from me? It will kill me if you do!"

I think he saw the intensity of my feelings; for he put his arm around my waist, and drew me to him.

"My own darling, my own May!" And I was perfectly content, because I loved him so; and perfect love casts out fear—the fear of doubt and untruthfulness.

He gave especial cautionary advice to Bob about the railway crossing, then turned to me, after I had seated myself.

"May, I think it best to tell you, because there should be perfect confidence between us, that I shall call, professionally, on Miss Campbell this afternoon. Headaches often are the precursors of fevers, you know."

That horrible, cold shiver ran over me again, then I smiled back at him.

"Why should you tell me, Norman? You do not usually specify your patients and their peculiar ailments to me."

A little angry frown contracted his forehead.

"True; I beg your pardon. Take care of yourself, May. Bob, there's a train due about the time you cross the railroad; keep your eyes open."

Then he walked off; oh, so glorious in his manly strength and grace; and Bob drove me off, further and further, to leave my love to go visit, professionally, the gold-haired siren!

The sun didn't shine so brightly as when I had arisen; the grass seemed dull in its green livery; Bob looked uncommonly stupid, I thought, and even Siren held his head as if ashamed of somebody—me, perhaps!

Altogether the day was a miserable failure to me, though I doubt if any one noticed it, and when it began to grow toward sunset, the hour I knew Doctor Chandos took for his unimportant calls, I became so strangely at unrest that I was obliged to wander off from the others, lest my agitation should be perceived.

At the appointed hour he came for me; and I noticed a slight discomfiture in his manner.

All that ride home, I wondered what was going to happen; that something was, I knew, from the gloom and distress that was settling over me.

I know I was a cheerless companion; for at length, after chatting nearly half an hour, Norman turned half-angrily to me.

"You are not yourself at all, May. What is it?"

"I don't know myself. I am certainly feeling very badly."

He peered into my face, and I let him

treasure I possess is a dear, faded bouquet he gave me years ago, that I, in my—foolishness—had preserved.

But, I have heard of him; I know she is dead who separated us; killed by the angry hands of a man who said she was his wife over the waters.

Poor Norman!

I think of him and pray for him, and wait; but perchance, he might come to me, one day, and I be gone.

Norman Chandos to return to me!

You ask me if I have no spirit? You ask me if I would be loved again by him who cast me off five long years ago?

I will answer you and say, I am a woman!

I loved him once, I loved him forever! When he comes to me, I will take him, thanking God for his great mercy.

How it Ended.

BY LETTIE ARLEY IRONS.

CARELESSLY humming a strain from Norma, with hands clasped behind her, and attitude unconsciously graceful, Hildegard Stuart stood in the bay-window of Mrs. Gordon's parlor and looked out at the passers-by.

She was transcendently lovely in her delicate Saxon style, her slender figure clad in a dress of blue silk with trimmings of rare lace, her rounded arms, bare save for the bracelets of antique cameo set in dead gold, gleaming marble-white against her azure robes. Her face was a perfect oval, with eyes blue as June skies, a pleading, childlike mouth, red as the heart of the pomegranate, and glittering, golden hair, that lay in wondrous shining waves all over her shapely little head.

She stood there just a moment; then, with a little, unconscious sigh, turned into the brilliantly-lighted room.

Russell Jocelyn, reading Tennyson by the center-table, closed his book at her approach, and rising, placed a chair for her. Tall, grave, handsome, he stood there, until she was seated, and then resumed his seat.

"Don't you think Tennyson like all the rest, a little unnatural?" "Elaine," for instance, "do people ever die as she died, for love?"

"I think not. If she had loved Laurence well enough to die if she lost him through

The following morning when she came down-stairs the guests were assembling for breakfast, and she took her place at the table quietly, listening indifferently to the buzz of conversation around her.

"There is a considerable difficulty in failing gracefully," Mrs. Gordon was saying, laughingly. "For my part I must confess I never could do it."

They were speaking of private theatricals of a few nights previous, in which Vivian Lebois had the part of a defeated rival in love.

"I should never be able to do it in real life," Miss Vivian replied. "In fact, I am not apt to undertake a game in which I am likely to be defeated. To try is to succeed. With me it is victory or death."

She glanced across at Hildegard in a way that puzzled Russell Jocelyn.

"*L'homme propose et Dieu dispose*," he quoted lightly. "There are some very satisfactory dispensations of Providence, Miss Lebois."

She laughed, but he fancied there was a shade of triumph in her tones.

"A telegram for Miss Stuart," announced the servant, entering with a slip of paper in his hand.

Hildegard looked up in surprise, but took the paper eagerly. There were only a few words. It read:

"Be at the E—depot at twelve to-day. Have news for you; do not wish to come up."

"Annie."

"Any bad news, Hildegard?" asked Mrs. Gordon, noting her puzzled, surprised look.

"No, it is nothing of importance."

She slipped the telegram in her pocket, and finished her breakfast hastily. She was both puzzled and anxious, and took the first opportunity of leaving the house unperceived. She would not order the carriage—she wished to go unnoticed.

Half an hour after her departure Mrs. Gordon entered the parlor, with her hair forehead disfigured by a tiny frown.

"It is perfectly vexatious, Russell. Miss Lebois expects a package by express to-day, and the coachman is seriously indisposed. Would you mind driving her to the depot?"

She wished to go herself.

Mr. Jocelyn looked at his sister's pretty, anxious face smilingly.

"Not in the least. I am always at your service, Vi, unless positively engaged."

"There's a dear fellow! She is ready now."

She went out, and Russell Jocelyn went



A WOMAN'S LOVE.

meet my eyes fully. Perhaps he read the suffering I knew must be there; at any rate, he spoke as he never had spoken before.

"This is sheer folly, May. I had no idea you were possessed of the demon to such an extent. Frankly, May, you do not please me at all; and I can assure you, that Miss Campbell, with her smile, be she only an acquaintance, is preferable to May Horton, with her sullen frown, even if she is a sweet-heart."

Every word was like a dagger. I *couldn't* Oh, it was more cruel to call me so; Winnie Campbell had indeed begun successfully her work of alienating us!

"Norman," I said, and in the early dusk I could just see how vexed he was, "I will not say what pain your words give me. Of course, if you prefer Miss Campbell to me, I have no power to prevent the choice. I only know she is a stranger and I am 'tried and true.'"

"I did not say that I preferred her, May; and I am sorry for my harshness to you. You'll overlook it, won't you? You know I love you, my darling, don't you?"

I never could withstand his love pleadings; and so, while the conviction was momentarily forcing itself upon me that momentarily forcing itself upon me, that there must be an end of all this some day, I suffered him to wrap his arm around me, and whisper his peace overtures. And it was all the more sweet, because I knew it could not always thus be!

That was the beginning of the beginning; and of the dreary, sun-forsaken, anguish-cursed days that intervened before the ending. I dare not trust myself to speak. It was all too horrible, too terrible to think of, and I am always trying to banish its haunting memory; always trying, yet never succeeding.

It seems ages and ages that I have lived since Norman Chandos took his love away from me, to give it to that other, that creature, whom, if I hated them, because she deliberately stole him from me, I fear I loathe and detest the very memory of, now!

Alone, here in sunny-skied Florence, I go on living and loving; loving Norman Chandos better than ever, truer than ever, even while he called her his wife.

I never can check this love; it is stronger than life, and I know it will be mightier than death; and though the grave may hide it for a while, it will burst forth triumphant on the other shore, where my religion and my heart teach me we shall be reunited.

I never hear from him; and the only

any cause, he would have loved her," answered Hildegard. "True love is dual, always, I believe."

"Do you think so?" His dark eyes lighted as they met hers. "It is a pleasant belief."

An exquisitely carved miniature case lay near Hildegard's hand. She lifted it and touched the spring.

"It is Vivian Lebois. How lovely she is," she said, speaking from the childlike frankness of her innocent heart. "It must be pleasant to be so beautiful."

Russell Jocelyn's outstretched hand touched her gold-bright hair with an involuntarily caressing motion.

"You, my pure-hearted little darling! You shine beside her bold, bright beauty, like a pearl beside a topaz," he said, impulsively. "Oh, Hildegard, I—"

The words he would have said died on his lips. There was a rustle of silk and velvet, a flash of light, and Vivian Lebois stood before them. Russell Jocelyn had only time for one swift glance at Hildegard Stuart's downcast eyes and flushed cheeks, when Vivian Lebois' clear tones broke the silence:

"Mr. Jocelyn," she was saying, sweetly, "will you sing this duet with me now?"

Mrs. Gordon wishes us to sing it to-morrow evening, and as it is quite difficult it will be as well to practice it, I think."

She looked from one to the other of the agitated faces before her with a little smile of triumph curving her red lips. From a distance she had noted their attitude, and approached purposely to thwart them. Her quick sense told her that she had succeeded.

Russell Jocelyn bit his lip, but arose at once.

"Certainly," he said, courteously; "I am at your service."

"Thanks; but I dislike to disturb you." Her splendid eyes looked wistfully into his, her perfect face expressed the regret she spoke.

For she was beautiful, royally so, this passionate daughter of the East, with her creamy-olive complexion, and dusky, waving hair; her perfect mouth, scarlet as the wave-sown coral, and eyes like dusky, glowing stars—royally beautiful, and she knew her heritage.

They went away to the music-room together—this grave, handsome man, and real, fascinating woman; and, left alone in the parlor, Hildegard Stuart dropped her head low on the velvet cushion, murmuring softly to herself:

"He loves me—he loves me!"

into the hall where Vivian Lebois stood awaiting him. She turned as he entered, with a little embarrassed gesture.

"It is really too bad to impose on your good-nature so far," she said, gracefully, "but there seems no help for it."

How was he to know that she had *never* answered for this very result?

"It is no trouble, but a pleasure," he said, bowing. "I am under obligations to the coachman for being ill."

She laughed a little, but the hand she gave him trembled. With all the strength of her strange, passionate heart she loved him, and his words, though spoken jestingly, quickened her pulses.

When, half an hour later, they drew up to the E—depot, there was a train waiting for the passengers to get aboard, and a throng of carriages and pedestrians blocked their way.

Russell turned the horses a little aside, and stopped close to the platform. A lady and gentleman stood near—so near he could have touched them almost, but so engaged in conversation that they heeded nothing around them. The gentleman was tall and dark, and the lady—yes, it was Hildegard Stuart! They were speaking in low tones, but a fragment of their conversation reached the occupants of the carriage.

"Then you will go with me to the West at once?" the gentleman was saying.

"Yes," Hildegard's clear, low tones replied, but Russell Jocelyn fancied they trembled slightly; "I will leave here to-morrow."

And Russell Jocelyn? asked the man.

"Russell Jocelyn is nothing to me, and never can be. You know me better than to doubt me, Archie."

"Forgive me, dear; perhaps some time—the rest was lost in the confusion. The man stooped, and Russell saw him press his lips to Hildegard's—saw him hold her an instant to him, and then he sprang aboard the cars, and then Hildegard, too, was gone. He turned to Vivian Lebois a face whose set whiteness startled her.

"Do you know who that man was?" he asked.

No. They appeared intimate; a lover, doubtless."

The pain in his face almost staggered her in her purpose for an instant—the next, she turned away her own to conceal the triumph there.

"It could not have happened better," she thought, exultantly; "I never dreamed of such good-fortune."

He was silent during the ride homeward, and she had the tact to leave him to him-

self. But that evening, in his sister's brilliantly-lighted rooms, thronged with guests—Russell Jocelyn could not have told how it happened, but he found himself at Vivian Lebois' side almost constantly.

And Hildegard Stuart, with a sharp pain gnawing at her heartstrings, wondered why he was so cold and haughty—why he scarcely looked toward her or seemed aware of her presence. And the next day, despite Mrs. Gordon's earnest protestations, she went away—and without seeing Russell Jocelyn. Went, and left no trace of her destination.

Mrs. Gordon was puzzled, Russell Jocelyn both glad and sorry, and Vivian Lebois triumphant. It left this man whom she so passionately loved under her influence almost entirely, and who ever had withstood her?

In the days that followed, she wielded her scepter royally. Russell Jocelyn, fleeing from himself, was fain to acknowledge her rare power; she was a brilliant and fascinating woman, and she charmed him. And so, unconsciously to himself, he drifted toward his fate.

The mellow October days had given place to those of chill November: the gray, almost leafless woods, rustled drearily in the restless winds, and Aldermere, Mrs. Gordon's beautiful country residence, had its usual quota of gay visitors.

On this particular night they were dancing, and Russell Jocelyn and Vivian Lebois to escape the warm rooms for a time, were walking up and down the piazza. They had paused for a moment in their promenade to contemplate the effect of the yellow moonlight on the distant mountains, when a fragment of conversation floated to them through an open window.

"Where is Hildegard Stuart? She was here last year."

"Earlier than this, though. No one knows where she is. She disappeared rather mysteriously, I believe. Went away nobody knows where, and has not been heard from."

"Quite a mistake," Miss Lebois said, as the conversation ceased; "I have heard from her. She went West with the gentleman you and I saw with her at the E—depot, and is married."

She said it quietly, without looking at Russell Jocelyn.

"Indeed? See how lovely the brook looks in the moonlight." His tone was as quiet as her own—how her heart leaped!

"He has forgotten her!" she murmured, under her breath. "Victory may be mine!"

They had reached the end of the piazza now, and she leaned against the railing—graceful, as she ever was.

"The brook seems always asking for something," she said, dreamily. "It's never-ceasing murmuring reminds me of some unsatisfied want of my own heart."

She wondered, when she had said it, at her want of reticence, and still more at its silence. She little knew what bitter memories were stirring in the man's heart. It was a year ago this very night that he would have spoken his love to Hildegard Stuart. For a whole year he had been fighting his heart, and this woman's words told him, only too plainly, that he had *not* conquered it. Could he succeed better with her help?

She loved him, he knew.

There was a momentary struggle, then he leaned toward her in the cold moonlight.

"Vivian Lebois, will you be my wife?"

Cold words, none too warmly spoken, but the woman's heart answered them.

"Oh, Russell! yes."

Her beautiful head drooped over his hand and a burning tear fell on it. There floated out from her dusky hair a faint, subtle perfume of the rare geranium, that convulsed his heart with a sharp pang. It was Hildegard's favorite; she had worn it that night, a year ago. Pity for himself and for the proud, passionate woman who loved him, made his words and acts solemn. He bent and touched his lips to her forehead.

"Heaven helping me, I will try to make you happy."

That was their betrothal. He told his sister next day, surprising her with an open letter in her hand which she folded hastily.

"Russell," she said, frankly, when he had finished, "I used to think you fancied Hildegard Stuart."

"I did—once."

She looked a little puzzled, but said no more.

"You have my best wishes. Excuse me, now, I expect more guests to-day and must see that rooms are prepared."

"Expect somebody else! I thought you had your 'particular' friends now. Whom do you expect, may I ask?"

"You may ask, but I shall not answer," was the laughing reply. "I am going to surprise everybody."

"One of Vi's mysteries," thought Russell, as she ran away, laughing. "What a little witch she is!"

Then he went out for a drive over the hills with Miss Lebois.

Mrs. Gordon's guests were on the *qui vive* that evening to see the new arrivals. Everybody knew they had come, but no one had seen them.

"Restrain your curiosity," the little matron said, merrily, in reply to a question; "they are up-stairs, making themselves lovely, and will be down shortly."

"Meantime, I beg that Miss Lebois will sing for us," remarked one of the gentlemen.

She sat down at the piano and sang. It was a sweet little German ballad, and her exquisite voice yet lingered on the last notes when the door opened to admit—whom? Russell Jocelyn started. It was Hildegard, and the man he saw with her that never-to-be-forgotten day, one year ago! Vivian Lebois made no movement, but her dusky eyes glittered and she pressed her red lip till the blood came.

Straight down the room they came, greeting acquaintances on either hand, directly to where stood Vivian and Russell.

There was only a cold bow between Hildegard and Russell Jocelyn, but the gentleman uttered an exclamation of pleased surprise at sight of Vivian Lebois.

"Miss Lebois! I had no thought of meeting you. I am delighted. You have not changed much in the two years that have passed since we met last."

She murmured a few words in reply, but her clear voice shook a little, and she drew back, nervously, her face a shade paler.

"My brother,

tercepted his sister on her way to the kitchen.

"Viola," he said, earnestly, "what is this mystery concerning Hildegard Stuart? Why did she leave so mysteriously, and reappear like one from the dead?"

"Mrs. Gordon read her brother's secret in his face, though she was far from comprehending it all."

"Russell, I am sorry," she said, earnestly. "You know Hildegard is an orphan. Her father left fifty thousand dollars to her brother and herself. A year ago an Havana creditor appeared, and to satisfy him, and clear their father's memory, they gave him all their fortune. It just liquidated the debt, I believe. They were poor, of course, and proud, and they went West without explaining to their friends here. Six months ago a rich uncle, dying, left them each a small fortune. Hildegard wrote me a month ago for the first time, and I invited them here at once. But, what is your part of the mystery?"

"Some other time—not now," he said, dropping her hand. "It is enough that I was a blind fool."

He strode away, entering the conservatory by a side door. There was some one there among the flowers; a second glance showed him the form and figure of Vivian Lebois.

"Traitorous, like all her race," he muttered, between his set teeth. "Vivian!"

She looked up hastily, revealing her face, while to the very lips, her eyes unnaturally brilliant. She came forward, pausing before him with clasped hands.

"Russell," she began, in a low, concentrated voice, "you know now that I deceived you—that I knew that was Archie Stuart at the time. I never heard that Hildegard was married either; it was a falsehood. I suppose you hate me, but it will not matter now." She paused as if choking, and unclasped her hands. They were livid with the pressure, and he saw where the nails had cut the white flesh.

"I have failed," she resumed, presently, speaking rapidly, "and for it all I can only offer in excuse my love for you. I will say it—I loved, worshipped you! Can you—will you—forgive me?"

The pleading appeal in her voice touched him. He took her outstretched hand in his.

"Willingly, freely," he said, earnestly, "even as I hope to be forgiven."

She bent over his hand and touched it with her lips. Then she dropped the ring he had given her in it, and turning slowly, walked out of the room.

He looked after her pityingly. He had never deemed her capable of such humiliation, and could guess something of what the struggle had cost her.

Then he thought of his freedom and of Hildegard. Did she love him? Almost as if in answer to his thought she stood before him. She started on seeing him, and drew back a little, her blue eyes drooping, her pleading mouth more wistful than ever. He walked straight up to her and took her hands in his.

"Hildegard," he said, all the deep love in his heart trembling along his voice, "I will say to-night the words I would have said a year ago. I love you, my darling, I love you! Is it too late?"

For answer she nestled her hands in his, and the little head, with its wealth of golden hair, drooped on his arm.

He lifted her face, and kissed the sweet mouth softly, thanking God for his great happiness.

Then he told Hildegard all, and in the intense happiness of the hour they yet found time for a pitying thought, and word for the wretched woman, who, in her passionate love for Russell Jocelyn, had so nearly wrecked their lives.

She was not in the parlor when they returned to it, nor did she appear again that night.

But, the next morning, they found her, lying with her face downward in the murmuring brook, the waving raven hair tangled with dead leaves, the dusky eyes closed, the proud, passionate, erring heart at rest forever!

ORPHAN NELL, The Orange-Girl:

OR,
THE LOST HEIR OF THE LIVINGSTONES.

A ROMANCE OF CITY LIFE.

BY AGILE PENNE.

CHAPTER XVIII.—CONTINUED.

"Did you notice that lady?" asked Clark, after he had joined me, and we had again resumed our walk.

"Yes," I answered.

"Pretty, isn't she?"

"Yes, quite pretty."

"She's the daughter of one of the richest merchants in New York; one of the old families, too—none of your modern codfish or coal-oil stock."

"Ah, indeed?" remarked. I knew well enough that he lied, but I was curious to know what he was after.

"Yes, she's a nice girl, too, not a bit stuck up. She's got plenty of money and she knows how to use it. She drives as handsomely a pair of horses as ever trotted through Central Park. I tell you she cuts an awful 'swath' as they say, on a Saturday afternoon at the Park. I have known her ever since we were children and went to school together."

"Ah! indeed?" I knew he was lying again, but I waited patiently for him to unmask the battery, which I felt certain he was bringing to bear on me.

"Yes, we're old acquaintances, you see, though I'm poor and she's rich; but, as I said before, there's no pride about her. She moves in the best society in New York, but she's just as friendly with me as though I was worth a million. In fact, she's a devilish nice girl, as good-natured as she's pretty. By the way, I had almost forgot to mention it; she's going to the masquerade to-night."

"What, to the Academy?"

"Yes, just where we are going," he answered.

The murder was out now. I knew what the next move was going to be.

"And, speaking of that," he continued, "do you know that you made quite an impression upon her?"

"Did I?" It was the old game over again, but my friend Clark had missed his mark. I was not a "flat," or a "greenhorn" to be twisted round the finger even of a pretty woman.

"Yes, you did, upon my honor," he replied. "She wanted to know particularly

who my friend was. I, of course, put in a good word for you, and she looked quite pleased when she learned from me that you were going to the masquerade to-night, and she made me promise to introduce you to her."

"Did she?" cried I, with an innocent smile of delight.

"Oh, yes! she did!" exclaimed Clark, swallowing the bait I had offered him, and I suppose laughing in his sleeve at the easy manner in which he was going to humbug me. "I tell you, you're a lucky fellow; the very first day in New York, to make a conquest of about the prettiest girl in the city! Why, I envy you."

"Do you?" I said in such a simple, innocent way, how could the wily "secretary"—the shrewd, artful Mr. Clark—the gentleman up to all the dodges of the metropolitan rogues, be else but deceived? It is astonishing how blind these cunning men are sometimes.

"I'll introduce you to-night. She told me what she's going to wear. Her dress is a scarlet domino, trimmed with white. She said she would be there about nine. Now, just you take my advice and follow this thing up. Go in and win."

Oh! how well this man knew the weakness of his fellow-men. With his counsel he appealed to the strongest passion that rules the will of man. I saw his object. His idea was at the masquerade to separate me from Vanderwilt by introducing me to this woman. In all probability he had some similar scheme prepared to entrap Joe. Once we were away from the savant, and lost in the crowd, why he was in their power. I saw the wisdom of Peters' thoughts; he was right—they would not attempt to rob Vanderwilt of the will at the Academy, but would decoy him away elsewhere. The plan was excellent, but it could not succeed. Joe, Peters and myself were too strong for him to cope with.

We stepped into a store devoted to fancy goods, and bought four half-masks, all of them alike, and all black. Then we left the store and strolled down Broadway again toward our hotel.

As we entered the hotel, whom should we meet right on the steps but John Peters. Peters was still sucking his quill toothpick and swinging his light cane. As we came up the steps, Peters gave Mr. Clark a searching look, but he paid no more attention to me than if I had been an utter stranger.

I noticed that Clark became a shade paler as he caught Peters' eyes. It was evident that he knew the detective, but of course he could have no suspicion that Peters was on his track.

After supper we all sat in the office—Vanderwilt, Clark, Joe and myself—and smoked and talked till about nine o'clock; then we took a carriage and were driven to the Academy of Music.

In the carriage we put on our dominoes. Clark had procured black dominoes for Vanderwilt and himself, so all four were dressed alike.

On arriving at the Academy, we left the carriage and entered the building. There was quite a lot of people going in just then, and they formed a small crowd at the door. I had not yet put on my mask, but held it in my hand, half-concealing my face with it. I was the last of our party; before me was Vanderwilt; before him Joe; and, first of all, Clark. While waiting, some one gave a gentle tug at my domino. I turned my head and found Peters behind me, clad also in a black domino and mask.

"Which is Clark?" he said, in a whisper.

"The one in black ahead; third from me."

"And Vanderwilt?"

"The one just ahead of me in black."

"All right," he answered. "Haw! at the door. I must mark these fellows, so that he and I will know them; there's thirty black dominoes here already."

"How many?" I asked.

"Look over your right shoulder, at the back of your right sleeve."

I did so, and I found that where he had placed his hand, he had left a small dab of white paint. With a smile he showed me a little tin tube of white paint, such as artists use for oil-painting.

"Let me get by you so as to mark the others," Clark and Vanderwilt. I will mark on the back; your friend, on the arm like yourself."

Quietly and without exciting any one's attention, he marked each of the three before him with white paint.

The crowd before us gave way, and we passed into the Academy of Music, the parquette of which had been planked over even with the stage, thus forming a splendid dancing floor.

The interior was brilliant with lights. All costumes of the world and of all periods floated about the waxed floor in the giddy movement of the dance. All was mirth and fun.

We four stood by the doorway and gazed upon the giddy and sense-entrancing scene. We had been standing there perhaps ten minutes, when a female form, clad in a scarlet domino, trimmed with white, and leaning on the arm of a large gentleman disguised as a red devil, came past. The lady bowed to Clark, who had not covered his face with his mask.

"That is Miss Preston," said Clark, to me, grasping my arm and pointing to the figure in scarlet; "come with me and I'll introduce you."

"Is that the one who passed us on Broadway to-day?" I asked.

"Yes; but, confound it, I've lost sight of her now in the crowd. Never mind; she'll be around again presently." Then Clark turned his attention to Vanderwilt, and commenced explaining to him the different costumes.

"Alex," said Peters, who had quietly kept out of sight and followed close behind me, "what did he say about that woman in scarlet?"

"He's going to introduce me, presently," I replied. "It's a plant, I think. She's in with this Clark. The idea is to separate me from Vanderwilt, and I suppose he's got something else fixed to get Joe away."

"What did he call her?" asked Peters.

"Preston," I answered. "Then I told him of the meeting in Broadway."

"You're right, it is a plant,"

"And who is this Clark?" I asked.

"He's a 'capper-in' for one of the largest gambling-hells in town—one of those fellows that lays in wait around the hotels, ropes in country merchants who come to the city to buy goods, gets them out for a little spree, and finishes up by going to the gambling-hell to fight the tiger! Just a little! Of course the countryman loses his money and the 'cappers' gets a percentage on what the house wins from his victims."

"What is best to be done; decline this introduction?"

"Oh, no! accept it! To decline might rouse their suspicions, and our game is to let them think that every thing is going all right for them. But keep near the door, and when you hear a shrill whistle, break for the pavement instantly. Say you're sick, anything you like, but get away. Here she comes again."

The scarlet domino came sailing by, Clark perceived her, and, darting forward, bowed and stopped her. They stood a moment in conversation—Clark, the lady in the scarlet domino, and the man dressed as the red devil; then Clark left them and came to me.

"Now I'll introduce you, if you like," he said.

"I shall be delighted," I replied.

So Clark took me out and introduced the lady in the scarlet domino to me as Miss Preston. I bowed in acknowledgment. She asked the red devil to excuse her, his satanic majesty said, "Certainly." I took Miss Preston's arm, and we commenced promenading up and down the ball-room—I of course timing our walk so as to keep within easy distance of the door.

After a short conversation of about a quarter of an hour, I came to the conclusion that Miss Jennie Preston was about as near a fool as she could possibly be without being one. It did not take me long to find out what her motive was for playing this "little game."

Clark had told her that I had just returned from the gold-mines and was absolutely rolling in wealth. I gathered this from her conversation. She tried the course usually adopted in these cases. She spoke of the cold, heartless world—of the strong, never-dying love of woman and faithfulness of man—what heartless creatures we were—how that she never, never could possibly be brought to love any wicked, cruel man, she knew she never would! During all the conversation I had been keeping a wary eye on the three black dominoes by the door, but at the end of her speech, as I turned round, the three forms had disappeared in the crowd. The time for action was coming.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DANCE-HOUSE IN WATER STREET.

MISS PRESTON and I continued our promenade for perhaps a half an hour after I had noted the disappearance of the three black dominoes. I had been listening intently for the whistle that Peters, the detective, had told me would be the signal for me to leave the ball-room.

As we walked up and down, I tried in vain to discover my three friends. There were plenty of black dominoes all around me, but none of them were marked with the white paint—the capital device that Peters had adopted to enable him to know us in the crowd.

While I was waiting for the time for action I amused myself by pretending to feel the deepest admiration for Miss Jennie, who leaned so lovingly upon my arm. But, in my heart, I compared her to the blue-eyed, golden-haired Nell, and the thought absolutely made me loathe her. Yet she was what men would call pretty. As I looked upon the crowd of gayly-dressed masqueraders before me, I noticed one, enveloped in a black domino, who seemed to be alone, and also seemed to be seeking some one. As he came nearer he turned, and I saw the white paint-spot upon the right arm. It was Joe. By some ruse, he had been separated from Clark and Vanderwilt. I felt that it was necessary to warn him of the signal appointed by the detective, so that he could also be at hand to take part in the approaching drama soon to be enacted.

"Will you excuse me for a minute, Miss Preston, while I speak to a friend?" I asked.

"You will come right back," she said. It was evident that her orders were not to lose sight of me.

"Certainly," I answered, gallantly. A few steps brought me to the black domino.

"Joe!" I said.

"That's me," replied the Spider's well-known voice. "Is that you?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Come, come, I believe I could tell my own grandmother in these darned masks," he said, emphatically.

"How did you become separated from Clark and Vanderwilt?"

"Well—you see, we got into a big crowd, and I got lost. I saw a big red devil—got a hold on me, and afore I knew it I lost the other fellows. I kinder got riled when I looked round and couldn't see 'em anywhar, and I just told Mr. Red Devil, that had a hold on my arm, that if he didn't let go, I'd walk into his affections, lively. You ought to have seen him git up and dust when I drew back to give him one."

"Joe," I said, "that fellow dressed as a red devil is a confederate of Clark's; it was a 'put-up job' to separate you from Vanderwilt. While the devil had hold of you, Clark drew Vanderwilt off in another direction."

"I don't know," cried Joe, disgusted. "Blazes it were!"

"If I come across that red devil, I'll tell rocks out of him."

"Look out you don't get into trouble with the police, because that's just what they want. If they can get us out of the way to-night they'll fix the savant and the will, dead sure."

"That's so! Now you're talking," responded Joe, sagely. "What shall I do?"

"Go and stand near the door. When you hear a shrill whistle, look out; that's the signal for me to leave the ball-room, and you just stop a moment and see if any one attempts to follow me. If I am followed, get up a row in the doorway if possible; then join me in the street; I'll wait for you a few minutes, if I can."

"All right, boss, an' ef that big red devil comes in my way, I'll give him a sockdologer he won't get over for a week, you can just bet high on that." Then Joe began, by a circuitous route through the groups of masqueraders, to make his way slowly to the door. I again joined Miss Preston; who had not moved from the spot where I had left her. She was evidently determined not to lose sight of me. For the next quarter of an hour I devoted myself to the task of lulling her suspicions, and making her believe that I was desperately in love with her. In this I succeeded admirably. In fact, it was quite an easy matter, for, in one of those sudden caprices that the female sex sometimes indulge in, she had taken a sudden and desperate liking to me. This rather flattered my vanity; all men are vain in some respects. But, unfortunately, I could not return the affection that I had inspired. I verily believe, that had I so chosen, I could have won her over to my side and to act for

and not against me. But, that was not to be; a pure and holy love held possession of my heart; no baser passion could find entrance there.

Suddenly, and without previous warning, a shrill whistle sounded through the Academy. It rung high above the strains of the music. No one minded it, though. All, of course, thought it but some misquandering of the time.

The time had come! I looked toward the door; I saw the black domino that covered Joe's person slowly approaching it. There was quite a knot of masqueraders gathered around the door. All was favorable to my purpose; now was the time to escape from my partner. She was leaning quite heavily and quite lovingly upon my arm. Suddenly releasing myself I pointed to the extreme end of the room.

"Isn't that Peters, the detective?" I asked.

I could see her lips tremble as she looked in the direction I indicated. The moment she turned her face away from me, I ran noiselessly through the crowd for the door. Just as I reached it, the fellow dressed as a red devil, who had evidently been watching me, with two others—one dressed as a brigand, the other as a Turk—sprang forward as if to detain me, thinking, probably, that I would regard this as a piece of masquerading pleasantry. But, before they could lay hands upon me, Joe, who had been watching for his particular friend, the red devil, jumped to my rescue; he hit the red devil a whack in the face which smashed his false nose and sent him reeling back into a group of ladies disguised as flower-girls. The red devil, in endeavoring to save himself from falling, caught hold of them; they all caught hold of each other, and the consequence was that the whole party came tumbling to the floor in a mixed heap, while the screams of the ladies pealed on the air. The red devil disposed of Joe turned his attention to the brigand, and doubled him up in mortal agony with a blow in the stomach. Then he grappled with the Turk, and seizing him by the collar and the waist, raised him clear off his feet and slung him head-first against a couple of policemen, who had run in to suppress the disturbance. All three came to the ground together. The Turk, astonished at the attack and the suddenness of his downfall, and imagining that he was still grappling with his antagonist, struck out hastily and bit one of the policemen in the eye; he, of course, retaliated, and the consequence was a brisk little skirmish between the two policemen, the Turk, and several of the bystanders, who first ran to separate the combatants and then joined in the melee. Under cover of this timely diversion, Joe and I made our retreat.

We hastily stripped off our dominoes and masks as we ran down the steps. On the pavement we found Peters.

"Jump into that back, quick!" he said, pointing to one that stood near the curbstone. We obeyed instantly. The moment we were in, the back started.

"I guess that red devil won't fool round any more feller in black dominoes, for some time," muttered Joe to me, with an air of satisfaction.

"Where are we bound, Peters?" I asked.

"To one of the roughest places in New York—Allen's dance-house in Water street."

"Has Clark taken Vanderwilt there?"

"Yes; can't you see the 'little game'? He's gone down there to see the sights. After they've been there a little while, they'll take Vanderwilt into a private room and induce him to drink something; the liquor'll be drugged; it will put him to sleep almost instantly, and then they'll 'go through him' for that will."

"How did you learn this?" I asked.

"Why, it was just as easy as falling off a log. I don't know as you noticed it, but when you left the back to enter the Academy, Clark told the driver to wait, that he should wait him inside of an hour or so. Hank, my partner, heard this; so he instantly told the back-driver who he was—that he was a detective officer on a 'lay,' and that he wanted his assistance. So that, when this Clark came down with a pal of his and Vanderwilt, and gave the direction where to drive, the driver repeated it in quite a loud voice, so that I could hear it in the doorway where I was hid. Hank quietly got on the box with the driver, in case the direction was 'put up' to throw us off the scent; wherever they go, he'll go with them."

"Peters, you have worked this case up capitably!" I exclaimed.

"Well, things haven't gone bad,"

"Bad? No! They couldn't very well go better."

"That's about so, I think myself. Their 'little game' was good, though, but as we could guess pretty well what their movements would be, we kinder had the 'inside track'."

"I replied, the detective, rubbing his hands quickly together with an air of satisfaction."

On we went, rattling over the pavement. I thought the situation all over. If I could only surprise the agent of Livingstone, just as he got the will in his hand, he probably, rather than give it up to me, would destroy it. This was a reasonable supposition, because, of course, Livingstone had not told this Clark all the particulars in regard to this will. He had probably told him to steal it at all hazards, but had not given express injunctions to preserve it. Livingstone's game was to get the will into his hands; then, if ever he were to occur to bring forward the claim of Salome, his half-sister, and prove that claim, why, he could produce the will and take one-half the estate, under its conditions, for himself and his sister Olive. But if the orphan child could not prove her right, why, he could hold the will back and enjoy the whole of the property. So it was clearly to his interest to hold the will, not to have it destroyed. But, as I said before, it was ten to one that he had not explained this to his tool, Clark. So the chances were that, if we could surprise Clark with the will in his possession, he would probably attempt to destroy it, thinking that, by so doing, he was carrying out the wishes of his employer.

At last we arrived in Water street. Our back stopped at a corner, three blocks from the dance-house, so as to not excite suspicion by driving up to the door. We got out and walked up the street. At the corner just below the dance-house, another back was standing. Peters pointed it out to me as we advanced.

"That's what brought the game we were in search of," he said.

Just before we reached the dance-house, Hank stopped out from the shadow of a doorway that had concealed him.

"How are things?" questioned Peters.

"All serene," answered Hank, leonically. I had noticed, during my short acquaintance

with this long-legged, country-folk-looking detective, that he was sparing of words.

"They're in the dance-house?"

"Yes; they've gone up-stairs to try some of Allen's forty-rod whisky. The old fellow was disgusted with the looks of the place and the girls; he said it wasn't a bit like the descriptions in the papers."

"Have they just gone up-stairs?" asked Peters.

"Yes. I've fixed it all right with Allen; told him we were on our way; he's very anxious to keep in with the police. Got a pair of pincers with you, Peters?"

"Well, then, we might as well go for 'em," suggested Hank.

We acted on his suggestion at once. On entering the dance-house, we found it well filled. Dancing was going on briskly. The principal patrons of the place seemed to be sailors and that class peculiar to large maritime cities known as longshoremen; together with a few better-dressed men, who had been attracted apparently by curiosity to see the den of the "Wickedest Man in New York."

I confess I was much disappointed in the looks of the place and its inmates. From the pictures in the illustrated papers, I had been led to expect that I should see a bevy of girls, the attendant "Hebes" of the saloon, plump and fair to look upon, dressed, too, something like the ballet in the "Black Crook" or "White Fawn," with short skirts exposing well-formed limbs; instead of which I saw half a score of painted, faded Jezebels, bearing upon their bloated faces the stamp of degradation.

On upon this dressing up of villainess and of sin, in purple and fine linen—these fancy pictures of the creatures of vice! It is all a falsehood. There are no bewitching denizens of the tenements of shame! They exist only in the foul imaginations of the "sensational" writer and artist, who cater to the basest passions of the human breast. The real, the living, are foul, degraded things; pollution is reeking in their breath; they live in an atmosphere of blasphemy; no man who possesses the true elements of manhood, who loves woman for her purity, and as being, when pure, something better than himself, a strong link in the chain that binds him faster to his Maker, can know these creatures of shame and guilt, and yet respect himself.

These reflections forced themselves upon my mind as we passed through the dance-house saloon, and went up the narrow staircase. At the top of the stairs, Hank, who led the way, motioned for us to walk quietly. He stopped before a door; the hallway was but dimly lighted, but enough to answer our purpose. Hank motioned for me to look through the key-hole of the door. I did so. The key was in the lock, but turned so that it did not obstruct the view. The room was occupied by three men, Vanderwilt, Clark, and a stranger, in whom I recognized one of the roughs that had attacked Joe in the Hudson River Railway Depot.

Vanderwilt sat by the fire-place, in which blazed a huge fire, fast asleep. I saw at once that he had been drugged, for a bottle and glasses were on the table. Clark stood over him and had just drawn the precious will from his pocket and held it up in triumph.

"Go it!" I said to Hank.

Quick as thought, he applied the pincers to the end of the key that projected through the lock, turned it, and thus unlocked the door, and we entered. Clark and his companion started with surprise. The wily "secretary" recognized us at once. He saw that the odds were against him, so he did the very thing that I expected he would do. With a laugh of triumph he thrust the will into the fire, and in a moment it was ashes! The game now was in my hands; the will destroyed, and Salome's claim proved, Richard Livingstone was a beggar.

"We don't want you; get out!" said Peters, coolly. Clark was astonished; he thought he had played his "little game" and won; but the destruction of the will hadn't seemed to annoy us at all. He was evidently puzzled, but he took the gentle hint given him by Peters and left with his companion.

We took the sleeping savant, put him in our couch, and took him to the hotel; there we put him to bed, he still sleeping.

I arranged the plan of action for the morrow with Peters. He was to call upon the heir Salome, tell her of her great fortune, and bring her to Livingstone's house, whither I was to precede her. I felt sure that when I showed Richard that I had both the heir and the proofs, he would relinquish the estate without a law-suit.

And to-morrow I was to see Nell, the girl that I loved better and better every hour! To-morrow would be an eventful day!

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 41.)

The Life-Hunter.

BY "BRUIN" ADAMS.

WHILE Kentucky could yet be termed a wilderness, though the Indians had long since disappeared from within her borders, a rich planter from the Old Dominion, by the name of Richard Reysten, with

entered the house. And thus they separated with kindly words, the last spoken on earth, and each sought their own apartment. In the course of an hour a deep silence reigned over the happy homestead. As the night grew deeper, heavy clouds came up from the south-west, accompanied by low murrings of thunder, and a rapidly-rising wind that partially smothered the sound of stealthy footsteps upon the gravelled walks, as several dark and silent figures glided hither and thither amid the gloom.

But the inmates slept on, unconscious of the deadly danger that menaced them. There were none at hand to warn them, for the nearest neighbor was fully ten miles distant, and so, amid the deep darkness and the crash of the tempest, was perpetrated a black and bloody deed, the details of which no man save the fiends themselves knew, for not one was left to tell the tale.

When Henry Royston rode home under the leafy arches of the forest next morning, his heart expanding with a joy known only to him who has told his love, and that successfully, he little dreamed of the terrible scene that the next turn of the road would bring before his eyes.

A heap of smoldering ruins, amid which could be discerned the charred remains of the house he loved, was what he saw. Not a soul remained; even the faithful house-dog lay dead near the yard gate, his head cloven with a bloody ax that lay near by.

The transition from supreme happiness to deep, overwhelming woe was as sudden as it was terrible. And before he left the scene to summon assistance, the light-hearted, perhaps frivolous youth, had changed to a stern, determined, implacable man, whose life was henceforth to be devoted to vengeance.

Fifteen years had elapsed since the family of Richard Royston, at one fell blow, had been swept from the face of the earth.

In all that time Henry Royston had searched and waited in vain, and when he again saw him, after this lapse of years, he had grown strangely old and haggard, the undimmed brightness of the full gray eye alone remaining to tell of a vigorous manhood wrecked in its very opening.

Since early morning, and the sun is now dropping behind a range of mountains in the west, Henry Royston had been in the saddle. Half a hundred miles lay between him and where he had built the morning camp-fire, and he showed no intention of halting.

He had heard that the men he sought had hidden themselves amid the wilds of the far West, then an unknown region, and like a bloodhound, he was on their trail.

Twilight deepened into night, and yet he pushed on. The stars came out and a faint line along the eastern horizon heralded the rising moon, when, from the crest of a sharp rise in the prairie, he caught sight of an object that caused him to abruptly halt and gaze intently ahead.

Seemingly a great way off he saw the flickering blaze of a camp-fire, and knew that either friends or foes were at hand. It might be white men, or it might be Indians, and hence the greatest caution was necessary.

Cautiously proceeding some distance further, Royston dismounted, and peering from his horse behind a slight rise, he prepared to reconnoiter the camp.

From a little clump of mezzit bushes he saw three persons, white men, seated around the fire busily engaged in preparing and eating their evening meal. They were rough, uncouth, and to a certain extent, villainous-looking men, but they were of his own color, and he determined on advancing.

Within twenty paces he was suddenly challenged. All three sprung to their feet, rifles in hand, and stepped forward between him and the line of light.

A surly welcome, mingled with innumerable questions, was extended, and after returning for his horse, which he now picked up near the others, Henry Royston sat down with his new companions to partake of their hospitality.

And now occurred one of those strange and totally unaccountable mental phenomena—if I may use the word—by which man sometimes arrives at conclusions—facts he might almost say, without any apparent reason or grounds for doing so.

The rude meal had been finished, and while the three took to their pipes, Royston spread his blanket upon the soft grass a few feet distant, and throwing himself thereon, soon became lost in one of those deep reveries that of late years had become habitual.

There was no word spoken that he could hear from where he lay, but suddenly, as though struck by an electric shock, he raised himself upon his elbow, and like a famished tiger, glared through the intervening darkness upon the trio, whose forms were dimly seen beyond the smoldering brands.

In that brief, fleeting moment, he knew that he had found the murderers of his family, the men that he had sought for fifteen years. Why he thought thus he knew not, cared not, he only felt that at last he was upon the point of achieving the vengeance so long nursed, and every fiber of his body thrilled at the hope.

Royston lay quietly watching his victims, as he now considered them, anxiously turning over in his mind what course to pursue. He was not long in arriving at a conclusion, and presently he arose and announced his determination of pushing on, as his horse was now sufficiently rested.

The movement was greeted with considerable surprise, and once he thought they would not permit his departure, but in this he was mistaken, and, without interruption, he saddled and bridled his animal.

In the meanwhile the sky had become overcast, and the heavy masses of dark, angry-looking clouds threatened rain at any moment.

The men had noticed this, and with feelings of stern delight Royston saw them, as he rode away, busily engaged in getting up a shelter with their blankets, etc., using their rifles and gun-ropes as stakes, upon which to set the tent.

His purpose was to crawl back in the darkness, and seek to learn from their conversation if his intuition was right. Out in the open this would be difficult, but when they were beneath the tent he could approach within arm's length.

In half an hour the storm burst with torrents of rain, but unaccompanied with wind. It seemed as though fate was favoring the terribly wronged man.

The men had withdrawn under shelter, and they did not hear or see, as had not these others many years ago, the stealthy figure that glided out of the darkness and crouched down beside the tent.

For more than an hour Royston, for it

was he, remained motionless, his ear drinking in with eager avidity every word uttered by those within. And then he arose, and noiseless as a specter, he drew back until the shelter could no longer be discovered.

"Great God, I thank thee!" he exclaimed, in a low, hoarse voice, while with clenched hands above his head, he turned his face toward the blackened sky.

Patiently he waited now. Hours flew by and yet he waited to make doubly sure that his victims would be locked in the arms of sleep. But at length the moment came, and once more holding in his hand the bared blade of a long and deadly knife, he stole noiselessly forward.

He reached the tent without alarming the sleepers, paused an instant to listen, and then raising the flap that hung over the entrance, he disappeared within.

There was no outcry, but one standing near at hand could have heard a sound, peculiar in itself, a deep, heavy *thud*, three times repeated, the last accompanied by an agonizing groan; and then all was still.

A moment later Henry Royston emerged from the tent, still bearing in his hand the knife, now dripping with blood.

Without pausing to look round, he sought his horse, mounted and rode away, taking the back trail whence he had come.

Three days afterward a party of hunters passing the spot saw a tent of blankets, near by which stood three picketed horses.

Prompted by a natural curiosity, one of their number raised the fly and looked within, but instantly recoiled, uttering an exclamation of horrified surprise.

The frail shelter was instantly torn down, and there lay three bodies stark in death, each with a ghastly wound directly over the heart.

Upon the breast of one was fastened a scrap of paper, yellow with age, evidently written upon long ago, on which they found these words: "These men are the murderers of Richard Royston and family."

The paper had evidently been prepared by the avenger, for the occasion which he knew would come.

Cruiser Crusoe: LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFORREST.
NUMBER FIFTY.

Of course, when informed by the beautiful Pabina of her discovery of a youth on the island, all knew well enough that the long-lost son was found, and preparations were pressed forward with such vigor that ere many weeks the rafts and floats were ready to bear the wrecked colony away from the volcanic region where their lot had been so long cast.

The particulars of that sea-voyage are indeed full of interest, and only through exceeding trial, danger and suffering did my friends at last reach my sea-girt home.

Oh, what an hour of bliss was that when the passing winds and the tides wafted my friends to me! Words can not describe our emotions. Our happiness was so great that the pain of all the past was forgotten, and that fair island seemed *Home*!

All were happy but Andrew—strange, wayward Andrew, whose passion for my beloved Polly grew with every hour, until seeing how hopeless it was—that she was my betrothed, he gave way in a sullen manner to what seemed to be his dreary lot. But of this, more hereafter.

Before I enter upon the record of my adventures when the whole of us were united, it will be as well to record how our meeting took place, as it will in part explain what subsequently occurred.

That we all labored ardently to prepare a fitting residence for all, may readily be credited and believed. All were equally anxious, with myself, to behold once more the dear ones who must so long to see one, especially, from whom they had so long been separated. At length all our stores were in, all the food we could collect, and my impatience was to be rewarded.

We took with us my zebra and horse, and four dogs, the former laden with such provisions as would be most welcome and suitable to my friends. We journeyed directly toward the sea, in that part which was fordable at low tides, a circumstance which not only accounted for the number of large animals on the island, but for the continual presence of the savages. We reached the spot toward evening, but the tide was up and we had to halt. Gradually, however, it subsided—a reef appeared here, a rock there, until the wide expanse between the island and the mainland was dry, except in scattered pools.

There was no time to be lost, as we intended sleeping on the continent that night. It was with a sense of mingled delight and anxiety that I hastened on my way. There was in my heart a secret source of sorrow which I scarcely confessed unto myself, but there it was. Still, joy, eager and expansive joy, was the uppermost feeling in my mind.

The gray dawn was peering forth from above the hills, when after a long and winding journey in the sand, into which we often sunk up to our knees, we at last reached the shore. I would have pushed on, but they were all too much fatigued, while there burned not in their veins that fire which impelled me always to quick and vigorous action.

For some hours then we halted, and after some sleep and refreshment, again started on our journey. Presently we came within sight of the palm trees, which overhung the village where dwelt all that we loved in the world. A column of smoke curled gracefully over the summit of the waving leaves, at sight of which, denoting as it did peace and tranquility, my sight became dizzy and I almost tottered.

At this stage, it was determined to send forward the negro to prepare them for our arrival, lest their great joy might overcome them—not that joy kills, but that it sometimes injures temporarily.

Away galloped the man upon the zebra, both proud of the task, and glad to see his sable bride, who, doubtless, was grieving for his absence. We followed at a rapid pace, and after going a mile further, had the satisfaction to see the whole body come forth in tumultuous haste upon a kind of grassy lawn to meet us. We were not a hundred yards apart. With a bound I rushed into their midst, caught Polly in my arms, kissed her wildly, and then turned to embrace everybody. It was a mad and wild sight. We were nearly frantic. To speak was impossible.

But who is this who stands apart, with folded arms, beneath a tree?

It is Pabina.

With a bound I rushed to draw her toward the group, and embrace her, too.

"But for this girl," I said, fervently, "I should never have lived to see you."

And then I took her hand and Polly's, and led them toward the shade of the trees, when all thought of work for the day was put off, and a great feast organized. Never was such a happy day seen before. Everybody was wild with joy. The sparkle in the eye of Polly I was never tired of watching.

Remember that I had been a lonely prisoner for six years, and only during six weeks had ever enjoyed the society of women. About ten children and females were all sent to bed, after which the elders, including my mother, held council.

There was but one opinion, and that was, instant removal to my island, where much had to be done before such a colony could be suitably provided for. It was agreed that the march should be begun the next day early, the whole party halting during the great heat.

Then thus began my father.

"Alfred, you love your cousin Polly?"

"I do," I said, blushing crimson.

"In a primitive state of existence like ours," continued my father, "we must depart from those rules which govern civilized States of older growth. Marriage was instituted for the protection of society, and the form is necessary, in an advanced age, to make it binding, and to protect the woman. But where we have no laws and no legal ministers, we must make laws for ourselves. Captain John Thomas, you have often read the burial service?"

"Often, sir," he replied, with a grim smile. "Then, one month from this, when the young couple have got themselves a house, you shall read the marriage service, and the marriage shall, under the circumstances, be as good and valid as if said by bishop or deacon."

I pressed my father's hand, and wept for joy. It was too much happiness. I could scarcely believe it.

Then, with a view to prepare for the next day, all retired, though I crept into the palm grove, where, seated under the shade of a spreading tree, Polly awaited me. And there, under a glorious tropical sky, with the stars shining down upon us, with a refreshing breeze sailing across the mighty heaven, I told the story of my love, and won her dear consent to be my wife.

With true womanly feeling, she would have rather had the sanction of the church; but when I fully explained the nature of my father's statement, when I assured her that to live without her was impossible, she yielded, and was mine.

"But how have you done without me all this time?" she said, archly.

"I have hoped. Nothing has supported me but, first, the hope, and then the certainty, that you were alive."

"Platner," she said, and as the gray dawn came up in the eastern sky, we parted, not to seek rest, but to rouse the negroes, and prepare breakfast.

We kept apart that morning. Our happiness was too great for words. We should have betrayed ourselves had we not busied about; and there was one beautiful but sad eye which seemed as if it had not slept, and which, dear to me as a darling sister, I could not bear to look at. But she, too, busied about, and made herself useful, looked after the children, helped to load the animals, and when the word was given to march, took two little ones by the hand, and led them on their way.

I could not help thinking, as we advanced along, that we looked much as Adam must have done when his family began to increase, or like Noah, after he had left the ark. It was a patriarchal sight, and the faces of all were so wondrously happy, that a brighter picture could scarcely have been witnessed.

I led the way, with my gun on my shoulder. I was universally recognized as chief, while my elders were my prime ministers. By my side walked Polly, while next came my mother, mounted on the zebra, which no one could sufficiently admire.

The mid-day rest was taken under some steep and beeching rocks, that gave good shelter from the noonday sun.

Four hours renovated both man and beast, and by a good march in the cool of the evening, the spot was reached whence, next day, we were to take our departure for the island.

They could see it even in the dull light; but such was the eagerness of all, that they would gladly have done without their rest to have gone over at once. But the elders objected, while the fact was, the tide also was beginning to rise, so nothing could be done but take rest.

It was past the meridian when I guided them, after leading them a little further to the northward, to the bay where I had seen the canoe from the Fan Indian encampment. All were struck with its beauty, and I resolved to guide them by this route to our new residence, taking my island home by the way.

All were in ecstasies of delight at the beauty, loveliness, and fertility of my island, where, but for savages, even my mother fancied she could consent to live, at all events, for some years. She wished to lay her bones in the old church-yard at home—as many have often wished before, and will again—in vain.

That evening we halted in the beautiful flowery prairie which I have already described. It was situated in every particular for a camp, having wood, a clearing and water. Many said this should have been our permanent location, but I bade them wait until they had visited every part of my island, when they might judge more fully as to the wisdom of my choice.

All this time I had scarcely seen any thing of Andrew. We shook hands, but on his part there was no cordiality, which, knowing the circumstances, I easily forgave him. He kept aloof from us all and avoided speaking. It seemed to me that he was doing his utmost to conquer his feelings and found the task a difficult one. We were seated at supper.

Polly was by my side, sprightly and gay. We had agreed to have a stroll, and as soon as the meal was finished rose, to make our way into the forest.

Andrew rose.

"May I have a word with you?" he said, passing me close.

"Certainly," I replied, walking on one side.

"It is agreed," he began, "that you are to have the sole control of an island which you may be said to have discovered—and I for one am willing to accede to the idea."

"Not if it makes you uncomfortable."

"Not at all; it is quite right. But I wish

to say that during my late life and recent troubles I have acquired habits of solitude, and if you have no objection, I should like to locate myself here. Give me some seeds and any thing you can spare, and I will try and see what I can do alone and unaided."

"If it be your wish, Andrew."

"It is. I desire to have an object in view, and what better one can I have than of making myself a home? I will come and see you, and you can come and see me if you wish. But I will carry out my own fortunes."

"You shall. It is a manly wish and shall be acceded to. I will show you all I have done. We shall have quite an extensive population soon."

He made no answer, but wrung my hand and went away. I began to be a little elated. I had all these years been monarch of all I surveyed, but then I had no subjects except the animals of various kinds which I had subjected to my sway. Now I not only had subjects, white and black, but I was about to have towns in my dominions.

At the same time I felt deeply for Andrew. I had peculiarly strong feelings in matters of love, and could not but pity him.

I rejoined Polly and we had a long conversation about Andrew, in which she expressed her pity for the young man, in very moving terms, when I changed the subject and spoke of ourselves, and that bright and happy future we had a right to expect. But how many have expected in the same way only to be bitterly disappointed.

Next day, by selecting a new path, we avoided that desert where I should have surely perished, but for the instinct of my zebra and horse. The way was longer, but we marched through stately woods, replete with fruit and affording grateful shelter, and so on until we reached my lake. All wanted to go on, so that my raft had to be mended and enlarged, but none cared for the trouble, when at last we stood upon the shores of my lake and visited my bower.

They were in ecstasies. The monkeys had somewhat deranged it.

Polly wanted to remain and repair it now, but I gently insisted on our duties to the rest of the colony, which imperatively demanded that we should finally complete and fortify our settlement.

"We will come here and spend the honeymoon," I whispered.

She blushed, laughed and yielded.

That evening we began our march to the village of the great tree, which next night we reached, without further anxiety or adventure—and one and all came to the decision that we had selected the right spot. Still much remained to be done, and our couches were sought early that we might be afoot betimes and begin work in earnest at dawn of day.

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Beauties of the Madras. Sing like a fairy.
Cling to those who cling. Sliding down the cellar door.
Dolly Green. Standing on the platform.
Good-bye to-morrow. Tassele on the cane.
Good by till I see you again. The beautiful boy.
Go away, skelter. The blonde that never dyes.
Her pretty, smiling face. The girl who lives next door.
How is this for you? The girl who lives next door.
Jamaica merry postillion. The girl who lives next door.
I'll see you again. The girl who lives next door.
I've found a home. The girl who lives next door.
I would if I could. The girl who lives next door.
Kiss me and I'll go to sleep. The girl who lives next door.
Little Emily. The girl who lives next door.
Little feet so white and red. The girl who lives next door.
Little Maggie May. The girl who lives next door.
Lovely Wilhelmina. The girl who lives next door.
My old woman and I. The girl who lives next door.
Never was so sad. The girl who lives next door.
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TO MY FAIR AND ANXIOUS INQUIRERS.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

Since many most beautiful mis-
 Are anxious to know who Joe Jot is,
 And who, guessing what kind of look his is,
 Are sure to guess that his is not his,
 I tell down in front of my picture—
 Which smiles from me in front of course—
 To tell in a rhythmical lecture
 If I'm man, beast, rhinoceros, horse.

But I beg to infer I'm a man,
 In the general form's acceptance,
 Or I try to be, much as I can,
 And am in my own estimation,
 At least I have failed to find one
 Who is more of a man than myself;
 I'm a good-natured, kind-hearted, kind one,
 And pay all my debts—when I've pelf.

My height is five feet six and a fraction;
 Trim built; constitution quite hearty;
 Consistent in all of my action,
 Gravitation, a hundred and thirty.
 Hair, black as an extra-dyed raven,
 And parted quite straight in the middle,
 Falling over my shoulders and waving,
 In texture as "fine as a fiddle."

Eyes dark as the hour before day,
 But bright as a new five-cent nickel,
 Full of love that will not fade away,
 But empty of love that is fickle.
 Nose, aquiline (well, I declare,
 I nearly had said aquiline),
 Neither turned up nor down in the air,
 And it neither too long or too short is.

My forehead is exceedingly full,
 At least I am sure it's not empty;
 My ears are not long by the rule,
 And my mouth is decidedly empty.
 And here of my mouth let me tell,
 By all that is sweetly and human,
 Though none was ever fashioned so well,
 It remains to be kissed by a woman!

My age—well, I yet shall be older,
 And I wouldn't much like to be younger;
 No head ever laid on my shoulder,
 Nor love soothed my heart of a hunger.
 My voice is the sweetest of many,
 Yet it never hath breathed in an ear
 Love's words, which are dearer of any,
 For where is the maiden who'll hear?

But there now, I think that you have me,
 At least in one sense of the phrase,
 Though were it the other, to save me
 I'd have no objections to raise.
 For after all—all that I can see,
 This living alone isn't funny,
 With nothing to cheer me but fancy,
 And nothing to strive for but money.

The fact is, I'm always too modest;
 I would blush at a hair-pin, I'm sure;
 But, if of all men I'm the oddest—
 I've a heart full of feeling and pure!
 And girls, let me say, I love you all,
 But the thought that is the saddest of any
 Is, the love of one indeed are cruel,
 They won't let a man marry many!

A Bold Game.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"He still lives!"
 The speaker was a portly, middle-aged
 man, and clad in the demi-military costume
 worn by the nobility of England during the
 last several decades of the eighteenth century.

The alchemist cast a look of surprise up-
 on his midnight visitor, and spoke in a
 voice which seemed to emanate from the
 grave:

"Then Thurston has counteracted the
 virus."

"He has, curse him!" hissed the other.

"No better chemist than the physi-
 cian lives in England. He made toxicology
 a specialty in the royal institute, and he
 is famous for his Mithridates. You
 could not have him discharged?"

"I could not. Henry will have no physi-
 cian near his bedside but Thurston. And
 that girl, Ethel, is rarely absent from his
 chamber. She suspects me."

"Ha! think you so, Sir Lloyd?" cried
 the breathing relic of the birth of a cen-
 tury.

"I do. But enough of this. He must
 die. Morford's Pride and Ethel of Moos-
 brooke must be mine."

"You came hither, then, for that which
 will speedily put you brother beyond the
 reach of all the medical lore in Christen-
 dom?"

"I did."

The alchemist rose and tottered across the
 room to a steel-bound chest. Relieving it
 of a small vial, he returned to his arm-
 chair, and held the vial between Sir Lloyd
 and the lamp.

A greenish liquid containing hundreds of
 tiny air-bubbles greeted the would-be-fratricide's
 vision.

"This liquor," said the old man, gently
 shaking the vial, "is Death's best earthly
 agent. Two drops will send the soul across
 the Lethæan tide."

Sir Lloyd snatched the poison from the
 alchemist's hand, and kissed the vial.

"This shall place in my hands every-
 thing I covet!" he cried. "How must it
 be administered? Speak, Bonfonti!"

"Permit two drops to fall upon your
 brother's lips, and he's in heaven."

"It shall be done!" exclaimed Sir Lloyd,
 rising, and carefully depositing the vial in
 an inner pocket. "And when Morford's
 Pride is mine, ten thousand pounds shall
 become yours, my good Bonfonti!"

The old man chuckled with great glee,
 and saw his murderous visitor depart.

"Ten thousand pounds! Why, it will
 waft me back to my native country. I
 must see Naples before I die."

"Ethel, were my brother to die, would
 you become mine?"

"No; I will bury my love in his grave."

The answer was firmly but gently spoken,
 and not calculated to rouse the anger of any
 man.

But it maddened Sir Lloyd of Lorne. He
 bit his nethermost lip till the crimson cur-
 rent burst forth, then walked away, leaving
 the beautiful girl alone in the arbor.

"What! wed you, Lloyd of Lorne?" she
 hissed, gazing after his retreating figure.
 "Never! You covet these broad acres and
 my smiles. The former may fall into your
 clutches some day; but the latter, never! I
 am not unaware of the accursed fact that
 Lord Henry has been poisoned. The virus
 still remains unconquered; but Doctor
 Thurston and myself are overcoming it.
 Whose hand administered the fatal draught?
 Yours, Sir Lloyd—his brother. For long
 weeks I have watched you, titled villain,
 and I will continue to do so, until Henry
 calls me wife. And you have asked me to
 become your bride—yours, a fratricide's.
 Should Henry die, I will erase every line-
 ment of beauty from my face, and you shall
 shrink from me with horror. You rode
 like the wind last night toward London,
 the dwelling-place of that old alchemist, Bon-
 fonti. What sought you there, Sir Lloyd?
 Poison. Ha! I will watch you as the sav-
 age watches his enemy."

Execute your deep-laid plans to the let-
 ter, Sir Lloyd, of Lorne, or Morford's Pride
 will never be yours.

"How does Lord Henry seem at this mo-
 ment, Agnes?" said Sir Lloyd, pausing at
 his brother's bedside, and addressing the
 little maid who sat near.

"He sleeps," was the response, in a low
 tone.

Lloyd bent over the couch and gazed in
 silence upon his brother's wasted form.
 Long weeks of suffering had Lord Henry
 experienced, and the poison administered
 by his brother's hand had brought him very
 near the gates of death. But, thanks to
 Doctor Thurston's knowledge of the anti-
 dotes of poisons, he was slowly recovering,
 and bade well to leave his couch the current
 month.

"Agnes, I know you have grown weary
 of watching in this close room," said Sir
 Lloyd, suddenly turning from the bed.
 "Do you go out and inhale the fresh air. I
 will watch my dear brother during your re-
 creation."

"Ethel bade me remain here until she re-
 turned," said the maid. "She rode over to
 Moosbrooke an hour ago. She said that you
 had gone to London."

A strange smile suffused the poisoner's
 face, at Agnes' last words, and again he en-
 treated her to leave her post, that he might
 commit the blackest deed upon the deca-
 logue of crime.

The maid, who did not suspect Sir Lloyd
 of harboring ill against his brother, was at
 last persuaded to desert her post and retire
 into the garden.

"Now is my time," muttered the poisoner.
 "I fain would do this deed at night; but
 then he is either guarded by Thurston or
 Ethel. What I would do must be done
 quickly, for Agnes and Ethel may return at
 any moment."

He drew the little vial from his pocket,
 and stepped to the side of the curtained bed.
 His brother slept, unconscious of the fact
 that he was nearer death than he had ever
 been.

"But two drops," the poisoner muttered,
 as he poised the vial above his brother's
 lips.

His hand shook like an aspen bough, for
 conscience, for the first time, was nagging at
 his heart-strings. But after a desperate
 fight he vanquished the sweet angel, and
 again returned to his work.

With the pace of a small drop of the
 green poison approached the mouth of the
 victim, and at last trembled upon the rim.
 Sir Lloyd watched it with an eagerness
 born of hope, and held his breath as it de-
 scended.



Camp-Fire Yarns.

Uncle Ned's Fire-Hunt.

BY RALPH KINGWOOD.

"Don't tell me 'bout your fire-huntin'!"
 said Uncle Ned—or, as he was often called,
 old Ned Hawkins—very emphatically. "It
 ar a way that war never intended fur
 folks to hunt, an' as fur the Injuns, why
 they're above it."

Now fire-hunting is a practice much in
 vogue in Texas, indeed in all new countries
 where game is plentiful, and of course the
 old ranger's assertion was strongly negatived
 by several voices, all exclaiming at once:

"Of course! of course! I didn't 'spect
 nothin' else!" said Uncle Ned. "Thout
 meanin' enny harm, I allers expect ter meet
 a lot uv pesky wooden-heads in all crowds
 es big es this 'un ar. But, boyces," he con-
 tinued, more seriously, "I've got good,
 sound reasons fur bein' down on that sort
 uv bizness, fur it cost the life uv the best
 friend thet Ned Hawkins ever had, an'
 what's more, better'n he ever expects to hev
 ag'in."

"Fire-hunting cost your friend his life!"
 Come, uncle Ned, tell us how it happened,"
 exclaimed one of the group.

"Yes, his life, lad, an' then arter his'n the
 life uv es purty an' sweet a gal es growed
 in the States. You see, his going under
 rubbed her out."

"It war his wife er his sister mebbey,"
 suggested another one.

No, 'twarn't his wife ner his sister
 nuther. 'Twarn't his sweetheart, as would
 hev kin ter be his wife arter awhile. But
 I'll tell ye 'bout it, lads, an' then ye'll see
 of the cussed practice ar what it cracked
 up to be. Why, I'll swear I've hearn tell
 uv more'n a dozen good men es hev been
 rubbed out by their eyes lookin' suthin' like
 a buck's in the dark, thet ar, lookin' like 'em
 to them."

"It ar more'n thirty years since thet
 night, but I remembers all about it jess es if
 it hed been yestiddy, an' I reckon when I
 goes under it'll be jess es clear es it ar now,
 fur it war'n't a ting es a feller'd be likely
 ter forget in a hurry."

"When I war a heap younger'n I am
 now, I left the old folks in the cabin on old
 Kaintuck river, an' with a big corn-dodger
 in my pocket, an' this hyar same rifle onto
 my shoulder, I struck a bee-line fur Arkansas

out an' tell 'em who he war afore they
 would shoot.

"Yes, thet he lay, an' the gal to be told!
 "Thet war the fust thought. An', boyces,
 it war the heftiest job thet ever I looked
 squal' in the face."

"We knocked up a kind uv carryin' con-
 sarn—a litter I bleeve they calls it, though
 why they shed, seen thet it ain't but one,
 I never could understan' an' put the pool
 boy onto it an' got him es fur es my ranch,
 whar we laid him out decent like."

"Ef I hed an enemy, which I haint, 'cept
 the red-skins, an' them I don't count, I
 wouldn't wish him no sech luck es to
 hev ter stan' by an' see what I did when
 them two old people an' the gal kim down to
 my place."

"Well, boyces, ye may say what yer please,
 an' I've hearn some uv you youngsters talk-
 in' an' disputin' an' palaverin' over the mat-
 ter, sum fur and sum ag'in' it, but that 'ere
 gal jess died uv a busted heart, an' no mis-
 take."

"I never see a girlred tree in a clarin'
 wilt faster'n she did, an' one afternoon 'bout
 sundown, they found her, seated ag'in' the
 big red-oak whar they use to meet, and
 make the'r love-passes, dead an' cold, her
 purty blue eyes wide open, an' starin' off
 to'ards the clump uv timmer whar her sweet-
 heart lay buried."

"Ever sense thatt night, boyces, I've been
 down on fire-huntin'."

"Thar ain't no real huntin' about it. It
 ar takin' a mean start on the dumb brutes
 whar don't know no better'n ter lay an' star
 at a bleeze. An' it ain't fitten that a gine-
 wine hunter shed be caught at it."

"Them's my sentiments."

RANDOM NOTES.

My wood-pile is getting so very low from
 some kind of hasty disease, that I am oblig-
 ed to sit up with it of nights to prevent it
 going off suddenly.

If some men would "give the devil his
 due," there wouldn't be very much of them
 left.

It is a mistake to think holes are bored
 with bor-ax.

A MARRIED man testified in court that he
 had only one engagement with his wife be-
 fore they were married, but plenty of them
 afterward.

JOE KING.

Beat Time's Notes.

ON ICE.

Of course there was a great stir when I
 approached the ice. Youth, beauty, and
 feistivity stopt to gaze at me as if they ex-
 pected to see a big thing on ice, indeed.
 Down the bank I went, skates in hand,
 amid cheers, smiles, and the waving of
 clean handkerchiefs; stept on the ice, and
 sat down so forcibly and sudden, as to com-
 pletely stun my brain, shorten my back-
 bone, and regret that I had not brought a
 pillow along for comfort in taking a seat.

When I recovered myself, with the assis-
 tance of a five-cent boy, I put on my skates
 and stood up, but as the murderous dealer I
 bought them of had failed to file teeth in
 them, but had left them perfectly smooth,
 and no doubt had greased them, too, those
 skates glided out from under me, and, as I
 had either to support myself in mid-air, or
 go to ice, I went to ice, and shipwrecked a
 small vial of invigorating fluid in my left
 coat-tail pocket. I got up again, feeling
 there is but little pleasure in skating without
 a pair of crutches, or a fence, and wishing
 the ice was not so slick by several degrees.

I got ashamed of myself, and knowing
 must do something, I made a violent effort,
 and struck out, going on one foot (the other
 away up in the air) delicately balanced, my
 hands clutching at invisible supports, to
 hold me level, when my balance broke and
 I sat down on unsentimental ice, to meditate
 on the fall of the Roman empire, the fall
 of man and the fall of Niagara, as well
 as of the spring that I made, and the general
 winter of my discontent. The managers of
 the pond came around and begged that I
 wouldn't crack up the ice so, and spoil the
 skating. I promised faithfully that I would
 do no more injury to their concealed prop-
 erty, and asked them if they couldn't lend me
 a hand to help me to skate.

I wondered if a person couldn't learn to
 skate before he ever went on the ice, and
 wished devotedly that I had.

Here I struck out again, but didn't strike
 what I wanted to, for I struck the looking-
 glass under me, knocking a piece eight
 inches thick out of it. I never could see
 much fun in skating. Then I tried the roll-
 ing step. It was very satisfactory, for I
 rolled fifty feet, piling up, or piling down
 rather, about forty persons in that distance;
 then I got up and went to cutting figures.
 I cut a No. 1 figure. The figure I cut was
 a little out of the arithmetic order, and was
 somewhat thus: make a pair of large feet
 in the air so high that they have but little
 chance of ever getting down again, with
 nothing touching the ice but the back part
 of my literary-looking head, unadorned
 with any hair; a hat forty feet off, and a
 cane forty feet further than that, and every-
 body remarkably close. Really, arithmetic
 furnishes no figure small enough to express
 how little you feel, or how little I felt.

A policeman finally came and took me to
 one side and told me my wife was very an-
 xious to see me, and that I had better hurry
 home as fast as possible, and give her as good
 an account of my absence as I could, and
 to call again when I shouldn't fall from
 grace so much.

In a late fashionable novel the heroine
 "sunk into a chair," but it is supposed that
 they fished her out with a rope. "Her
 tears fell fast," but it is some satisfaction to
 know that they were afterward picked up
 and handed back to her. "She fell into a
 decline," but fortunately she didn't drown.
 "She gave him a beautiful smile," and he
 put it in his off vest-pocket, and took it
 home. "She looked her life," but kept the
 key. "She caught her breath," and tied it
 with a string.

THE shoemaker who contracted for and
 built these boots is still living. I am sorry
 to say. Why he does I don't know. In
 the first place, he got too much lumber in
 them, though he assured me they would
 shrink to my feet, but I didn't believe him,
 for the other pair he once made me were
 too tight, and he told me they'd give. My
 feet would follow wherever the leather
 stretched to, and I knew they would soon
 spread all over the United States, and I
 begged him to boil them down. They are
 much too long for my feet, so you can form
 some idea of their extreme length. The
 shoemaker said he would never go back on
 his work, so I wear them to advertise his
 business.

A YOUNG poet sends me two or three
 poems which he says are some of his best.
 Would he be kind enough to send two or
 three of his worst; they would be curiosities.

A TAILOR made me a pair of pants lately,
 but, as he made no arm-holes in them (they
 come so high up) they don't fit very well.
 They are so long that I have tied the lower
 ends up and don't have to wear stockings;
 but the pockets are so far around that I
 have to lie down on my back to get my
 hands in them. They are so tight that I
 haven't been hunched for a week, and the
 only redeeming quality about them is that
 they are charged.

WHEN I think of all the good I have done
 in the world I feel very good, and thank
 Providence that I have lived, and when I
 think of all the bad I have done I feel bad,
 and thank Providence that I haven't died.

How much better we would do if we tend-
 ed to our own affairs! I know some fellows
 who would get rich if they would let mine
 alone.

If your chimney smokes, turn it upside
 down and shake it, beat it, burn a broom
 down its throat, give it a dose of salts, take
 it in and put it to bed, and, if necessary,
 swear at it, and thrash your wife.

ONE member of Congress said of another,
 that, inasmuch as he had been slaying the
 truth, he was an assassin. The other replied
 that his calumniation was the first two syl-
 lables of the word.

I KNOW a fellow so tall that he never
 stoops to speak to common people.

YOU have all read in the Bible (when you
 were little children of course, and went to
 Sunday School) about good Sam Aritan, so
 it will not be necessary for me to do more
 than mention his name here, or you might
 go and get your neighbor's Bible and find
 out all about him if you don't know.

PEOPLE in scraping an acquaintance do
 not always use a scraper.

BEAT TIME.